Daily Report

Central Eurasia

FBIS-SOV-93-050
Wednesday
17 March 1993

Daily Report
Central Eurasia

FBIS-SOV-93-050 *17 March 1993*

CONTENTS

NOTICE TO READERS: An * indicates material not disseminated in electronic form.

INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

Kozyrev Arrives in Helsinki for Baltic Council Meeting *[ITAR-TASS]* 1
Discusses Yeltsin's Position *[Russian TV]* 1
Baltic Council Meeting Opens 16 Mar *[ITAR-TASS]* 1
Estonia Elected To Chair Council *[Tallinn Radio]* 1
Russian Delegate Addresses Meeting *[ITAR-TASS]* 1
Kozyrev Cuts Visit Short, Returns to Moscow *[ITAR-TASS]* 2
Speaks 'Earlier Than Planned' *[INTERFAX]* 2
Talks With Finland's Koivisto *[ITAR-TASS]* 3
Not To Return for Meeting *[ITAR-TASS]* 3
Shaposhnikov Meets NATO Commander Paul Miller *[ITAR-TASS]* 3
'Broader Contacts' Welcomed *[INTERFAX]* 4
'Collective Security' System Discussed *[INTERFAX]* 4
Army Will Not 'Play With Politics' *[ITAR-TASS]* 4

INTERREGIONAL AFFAIRS

Shaposhnikov Addresses Meeting of CIS Representatives *[Radio Rossii]* 5
Article Views Heads of Government Meeting *[ROSSIYSKIYE VESTI 16 Mar]* 5
Heads of State To Meet in Yerevan in April *[ITAR-TASS]* 5
ITAR-TASS Carries Press Review for 17 Mar 6

RUSSIA INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

Kozyrev To Discuss Yeltsin's Appeal to CIS Leaders *[Moscow Radio]* 7
'Text' of Appeal *[ITAR-TASS]* 7
French President Mitterrand on Official Visit 8
Presidents Hold News Conference *[Radio Rossii]* 8
More on News Conference *[ITAR-TASS]* 11
Cease-Fire Urged in Nagorno-Karabakh *[ITAR-TASS]* 12
Statement Supports Vance-Owen Plan *[ITAR-TASS]* 12
Early G-7 Meeting Urged *[INTERFAX]* 12
Mitterrand Departs *[ITAR-TASS]* 13
Not Just 'Good Wishes' Wanted From Mitterrand *[IZVESTIYA 16 Mar]* 13
Spokesman on U.S. Summit, DPRK Pullout From Nuclear Treaty *[INTERFAX]* 14
'Great Hopes' Pinned on Summit *[ITAR-TASS]* 14
Zorkin Urges Multiparty 'National Accord' Conference *[IZVESTIYA 17 Mar]* 14
Clinton Receives Zorkin *[ITAR-TASS]* 15
Foreign Ministry Official Hails U.S. Humanitarian Aid *[ITAR-TASS]* 15
Change in U.S. Perceptions of Russia Seen *[PRAVDA 13 Mar]* 16
Western Response to Yeltsin Plight Viewed *[PRAVDA 16 Mar]* 18
Churkin on Bosnian Settlement, Aid Convoys *[ROSSIYSKIYE VESTI 16 Mar]* 19
Voices Support for Vance-Owen Plan *[Nicosia Radio]* 20
Ministry Says Aid To Be Airdropped to Bosnians *[Radio Rossii]* 20
'Source' Says Gas Pricing Accord Reached With Ukraine *[INTERFAX]* 20
Oil Talks End 'Without Result' *[Moscow TV]* 20

Details of KAL Jet Downing To Be Released *[INTERFAX]* 20
Meeting With Azerbaijani Delegation Canceled *[INTERFAX]* 21
Official on Resuming Economic Ties With Azerbaijan *[Baku TV]* 21
NOVYE VREMYA Interviews RSA President *[Moscow International]* 21
Fedorov Participation in G-7 Meeting Viewed *[IZVESTIYA 17 Mar]* 22
Chubays Signs Credit Agreement With EBRD *[Russian TV]* 22

RUSSIA NATIONAL AFFAIRS

Eighth Congress of People's Deputies

Officials Continue To React to Congress Outcome 23
Early General Elections Urged *[NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA 16 Mar]* 23
Yeltsin Representative Views Congress *[St. Petersburg Radio]* 23
Shakhray on 'Weakened Russia' *[ROSSIYSKIYE VESTI 17 Mar]* 24
Yastrzhembskiy Gives Briefing *[ITAR-TASS]* 24
Notes International Concern *[INTERFAX]* 25
Sobchak Sees 'No Specific Results' *[ITAR-TASS]* 25
Regional Political Leaders Cited *[INTERFAX]* 25
Supreme Soviet Spokesmen Comment *[INTERFAX]* 26
Volskiy Comments *[ITAR-TASS]* 26
Further on Volskiy Remarks *[PRAVDA 16 Mar]* 26
Cossacks, Trade Union Leaders Support Yeltsin *[Russian TV]* 27
'Independent Civic Initiative' Against Khasbulatov *[IZVESTIYA 16 Mar]* 27
Democrats on 'Revenge of Forces of Reaction' *[IZVESTIYA 16 Mar]* 28
Moscow Poll Shows More Yeltsin Supporters *[IZVESTIYA 17 Mar]* 28
Congress Decree on Observance of Constitution *[PRAVDA 16 Mar]* 29
On Possible Early Elections *[ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA 16 Mar]* 29
Regional Deputies on Views of Yeltsin, Congress *[PRAVDA 13 Mar]* 29
Regions Gain Strength in Power Struggle *[NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA 16 Mar]* 30
Article Applauds Congress 'Firmness' *[SOVETSKAYA ROSSIYA 16 Mar]* 31
Conservatives' 'Manipulation' of People Hit *[IZVESTIYA 13 Mar]* 33
Congress of Deputies Proceedings Analyzed *[PRAVDA 16 Mar]* 34
Congress Gives 'More Confidence' for Future *[ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA 16 Mar]* 34

Political Issues

Yeltsin Names Bank Chairman, Other Officials to Cabinet *[ITAR-TASS]* 35
Signs Decree To Expand Council *[ITAR-TASS]* 36
Miners Remain on Strike Alert; Vorkuta Mine Official Slain *[INTERFAX]* 36

Military Issues

Grachev: Army True to Law, Loyal to Economic Reforms *[ITAR-TASS]* 36
Says Army Subordinate to Constitution *[INTERFAX]* 37
Defense Ministry Board Reviews START I Implementation *[INTERFAX]* 37
Defense Official on Tank Industry, Armaments Program *[ITAR-TASS]* 37

Economic Issues

Fedorov Interviewed on Congress, Economic Situation *[Russian TV]* 37

Regional Affairs

North Ossetia-Ingushetia Situation 'Remains Complex' *[Moscow Radio]* 43
Situation Being Discussed *[ITAR-TASS]* 43
Ingush President Appeals to N. Ossetian Leaders *[ITAR-TASS]* 43
Chechen Opposition Urges Unity for Democratic Changes *[INTERFAX]* 43

UKRAINE

International Affairs

Officials Discuss Strengthening Ties With Iran *[Tehran IRNA]* 45
Leaders Hold Talks *[Kiev TV]* 45
Rafsanjani Message Given to Kravchuk *[Tehran IRNA]* 45
Official Briefs Supreme Soviet on Russian Gas Deal *[INTERFAX]* 46
Agreement Signed With Polish Security Service *[Warsaw PAP]* 46
Further on Accord *[Kiev TV]* 46

National Affairs

'Final Part' of 'Exclusive' Kravchuk Interview *[INTERFAX]* 47
Kravchuk Approves Sevastopol's Special Status *[ITAR-TASS]* 48
Parliament Gives New Powers to Heads of Local Councils *[INTERFAX]* 48
Cabinet To Study Construction of Tanker Terminal *[Kiev TV]* 48

WESTERN REGION

Belarus

Negotiations With U.S. Firms on Oil Investment Ongoing *[Minsk International]* 49
Delegation Visits Lithuania, Signs Trade Accord *[BELINFORM]* 49
Border Troops Commander on Establishing Borders *[BELINFORM]* 49
Government Restricts Sale, Possession of Firearms *[INTERFAX]* 50
Low-Salaried Specialists' Minimum Wage Raised *[IZVESTIYA 13 Mar]* 50

Moldova

National Democrats Demand Withdrawal of Russian Army *[INTERFAX]* 50
Dniester's Smirnov Vows Independent Military Forces *[BASAPRESS]* 51
Council Discusses Economic Relations With Romania *[Bucharest Radio]* 51
Snegur Departs for India Visit, Turkmenistan Stopover *[INTERFAX]* 51
Arrives in India 17 Mar *[ITAR-TASS]* 51

CENTRAL ASIA

Kazakhstan

Nazarbayev Issues Message Hailing Republican Guards *[INTERFAX]* 52
Nazarbayev Issues Resolution on Privatization Management *[KAZTAG]* 52

Tajikistan

Checkpoints Set Up; Public Reluctant To Surrender Arms *[Moscow Radio]* 52
Operation To Disarm Groups Begins *[Moscow TV]* 52
Operations Against Opposition Denied *[INTERFAX]* 52
End to Lawlessness Urged *[Dushanbe Radio]* 53
Troops Abroad Urged To Continue Service *[Radio Rossii]* 53

Turkmenistan

Niyazov Discusses Foreign Policy, Military Doctrine *[INTERFAX]* 54
Niyazov To Visit U.S.; Citizens Receive Free Utilities *[ITAR-TASS]* 55
Friendship Treaty Signed With Moldova *[Moscow Radio]* 55

Uzbekistan

Investment Insurance Accord Signed With U.S. *[UZBEKISTAN APN]* 55
Ambassador to Moscow on Relations With Russia *[MOSKOVSKAYA PRAVDA 16 Mar]* 55

CAUCASUS

Armenia

Foreign Ministry Spokesman Clarifies Stance on Karabakh *[Yerevan Radio]* 58
Azerbaijanis Said Massing Tanks, Troops Around Lachinskiy *[Yerevan Radio]* 58
Forces Repel Azerbaijani Attacks *[Yerevan Radio]* 59

Azerbaijan

Elchibey Expresses 'Anxiety' Over Russian Congress *[Baku Radio]* 59
Security Official Warns Against Border Violations *[Baku Radio]* 59
Foreign Minister on 'Balanced' Middle East Relations *[TURAN]* 60

Georgia

Foreign Ministry Protests Russian 'Aggression' *[ITAR-TASS]* 60
Shevardnadze Statements, Action on Abkhazia Reported 60
Briefs Parliament on 'Russo-Georgian Conflict' *[CONTACT INFORMATION AGENCY]* ... 60
More on Statement to Parliament *[IZVESTIYA 17 Mar]* 61
Assails Russian 'Reactionary Forces' *[ITAR-TASS]* 61
Notes 'Rigid' Russian Stance *[INTERFAX]* 62
Announces Mobilization; Flies to Sukhumi *[ITAR-TASS]* 62
Proposes Meeting With Yeltsin *[INTERFAX]* 62
Shevardnadze Arrives in Sukhumi *[ITAR-TASS]* 63
Contemplates 'Retaliatory Measures' *[INTERFAX]* 63
Military Operations, Status of Fighting Updated 63
Reinforcements Arrive in Sukhumi *[INTERFAX]* 63
'Bitter Fighting' Reported *[INTERFAX]* 63
Shevardnadze on Military Situation *[ITAR-TASS]* 64
Georgians Battling To Regain Positions *[ITAR-TASS]* 64
More on Counterattack in Sukhumi *[INTERFAX]* 64
Abkhazia Denies Russian Involvement *[ITAR-TASS]* 65
Russian Defense Ministry Denies Role *[IZVESTIYA 17 Mar]* 65
Abkhaz Advance Reported *[Russian TV]* 66
Aircraft, Tanks Deployed *[Russian TV]* 66
Georgian Troops Shell Russian Units *[INTERFAX]* 66
Georgian Strike on Russian Lab Kills 3 *[Moscow Radio]* 67
Abkhaz Offensive 'Repulsed' *[Tbilisi Radio]* 67
Georgians Force Abkhaz Retreat 17 Mar *[ITAR-TASS]* 67
Prime Minister Briefs Foreign Envoys *[ITAR-TASS]* 68
Circassians Ready To Save Abkhazians *[INTERFAX]* 68

BALTIC STATES

Estonia

Officials Denounce Russian Foreign Minister's Statement 69
Kozyrev Speech 'Unacceptable' *[BALTFAX]* 69
Government To Issue Protest Note *[ETA NEWS RELEASE]* 69
'Chauvinistic Thinking' Decried *[BALTFAX]* 69
Statement 'Gross Act of Interference' *[BALTFAX]* 69
Government To Deal 'Seriously' With Russian Spying *[BNS]* 70
Paldiski Submarine Base To Remain Closed, Under Guard *[ETA NEWS RELEASE]* 70
Defense Minister Rebas on 'Tension' in Parliament *[Tallinn Radio]* 70
Retired Officers Denounce Rebas 'Fifth Column' Remark *[BALTFAX]* 70
President Returns From 'Unofficial' Visit to Germany *[Tallinn Radio]* 71
Foreign Minister Meets Danish Counterpart *[Tallinn Radio]* 71

Latvia

Defense Minister Discusses Border Security With Baltic Envoys *[Riga Radio]* 71
Lithuanian Prosecutor General Arrives *[BALTFAX]* 71
Trade Agreement Concluded With Estonia *[BNS]* 71
Popular Front Announces Election Platform *[LETA]* 72

Lithuania

Brazauskas Announces Composition of New Government *[Vilnius Radio]* 72
'Pragmatist' New Premier Discusses Policy Aims *[NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA 16 Mar]* 72
Former Prime Minister Addresses Protestors *[BALTFAX]* 73
Death of Air Force Chief Believed Suicide *[BALTFAX]* 73
Belarus Officials Pay Visit, Sign Agreements *[Vilnius Radio]* 74

Kozyrev Arrives in Helsinki for Baltic Council Meeting

LD1503212293 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 2035 GMT 15 Mar 93

[By ITAR-TASS special correspondents Aleksandr Surikov and Georgiy Shmelev]

[Text] Helsinki March 15 TASS—Russian Minister of Foreign Affairs Andrey Kozyrev arrived in Helsinki today after visiting Kaliningrad and Vilnius. He is due to take part in a session of the Council of the Baltic Countries together with the foreign minister of Denmark, Germany, Latvia, Lithuania, Norway, Poland, Finland, Sweden and Estonia, as well as a representative of the Commission of European Communities.

The Russian delegation will draw the attention of the conference to the protection of the interests of the Russian-speaking community in the Baltics, the need to establish the post of the Council's Commissar for Human and Minority Rights and the Organisation of International Assistance to the Withdrawal of Russian Troops from the Baltics and the establishment of an international fund to provide housing and social services for them in Russia.

After the two-day session, Kozyrev's working visit to Finland will take place.

Discusses Yeltsin's Position

LD1603124093 Moscow Russian Television Network in Russian 1100 GMT 16 Mar 93

[Text] [Russian Foreign Minister] Andrey Kozyrev is convinced that the results of the Eighth Congress of Russian People's Deputies do not weaken Yeltsin's position. One should not think that following the Congress, the situation in Russia has been destabilized or that President Yeltsin's position and his control over the situation in the country have been weakened, Andrey Kozyrev declared on his arrival in Helsinki on Monday evening. The Foreign Ministry chief stressed that Russia remains a strong democratic partner, as before, and that there is no need for any panic over the latest events in Moscow.

Asked whether Yeltsin is intending to declare a state of emergency, the minister said: Let us see what it proves necessary to do within the context of the democratic process to continue the reform process.

Kozyrev said that at the Baltic States Council, Russia intends to put forward two or three initiatives aimed at stepping up cooperation between the states of the region. He divided these initiatives roughly into two groups: first, defense of human rights and of democracy against the threat of nationalism; and second, regional economic cooperation.

Baltic Council Meeting Opens 16 Mar

LD1603095193 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 0855 GMT 16 Mar 93

[By ITAR-TASS correspondents Aleksandr Surikov and Georgiy Shmelyov]

[Text] A second session of the council of Baltic countries opens in Helsinki on Tuesday [16 March]. The session, held at the level of foreign ministers of countries—member states of the council, will take place at "Marina" Congress Hall situated on the shore of the Gulf of Finland.

The Russian delegation to the session, which is expected to last for two days, is led by Russian Foreign Minister Andrey Kozyrev.

The council was established a year ago to coordinate and promote international cooperation in the Baltic region. Taking part in the work of the council are Denmark, Germany, Latvia, Lithuania, Norway, Poland, Russia, Finland, Sweden, Estonia and the EC Commission.

The Russian delegation intends to draw the attention of the forum to the problem of the interests of the Russian-speaking population in Baltic states and to the importance of introducing in the framework of the council the post of a commissar for human rights and rights of ethnic minorities.

The efforts of Russian diplomats will be aimed at the organisation of international assistance to the withdrawal of Russian troops from the territory of Baltic states and their accomodation in their native places and the establishment of a special international foundation for this purpose.

Estonia Elected To Chair Council

LD1603163593 Tallinn Radio Tallinn Network in Estonian 1500 GMT 16 Mar 93

[Text] The sitting of the Council of Baltic States which is taking place in Helsinki has elected Estonia to chair the council during its next term of work. That means that starting from 17 March Estonia will coordinate the work of the council.

Foreign Minister Trivimi Velliste said in an interview with Estonian Radio that Estonia has been preparing for this task thoroughly. According to Velliste this will provide Estonia with an opportunity to protect better its own interests and those of its neighbors, Latvia and Lithuania.

Russian Delegate Addresses Meeting

LD1603233893 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1433 GMT 16 Mar 93

[Report by special ITAR-TASS correspondents Aleksandr Surikov and Georgiy Shmelev]

[Text] Helsinki, 16 Mar—A representative of the Russian delegation took the floor on behalf of the Russian Federation foreign minister at the second session of the

Baltic Council, which opened here today. Andrey Kozyrev interrupted his visit to Helsinki at President Boris Yeltsin's request and departed for Moscow by air to take part in the talks with French President Francois Mitterrand, who had arrived in Moscow. It is expected that Andrey Kozyrev will return to the Finnish capital tomorrow to continue his participation in the Baltic Council session.

The Council of the Baltic Sea states should become a mechanism for tackling specific problems, rather than some sort of a rostrum to air mutual grievances, emphasized the Russian representative. That is indeed why we need two to three tangible solutions to the most acute questions, if we want the Council to be "real." In this context, the speaker pointed out the threat posed by aggressive nationalism and chauvinism. "In the post-communist part of the world, all forces of reaction and revenge rally on their banners, and this includes Russia."

This is why it appears extremely important for the Council to draw up a broad program of assistance to democratic institutions, including the defense of human rights and national minorities.

Deep concern was voiced in the speech in connection with the situation of the Russian-speaking population in the Baltic states, especially in Estonia and Latvia. Speaking of certain specific proposals to step up the practical work of the Council, the Russian Federation representative emphasized that a year ago Russia proposed to the Baltic Council that a post of commissioner for human rights and the protection of national minorities should be established. The activities of this commissioner would in no way duplicate the functions of the similar CSCE commissioner. On the contrary, the Baltic Council commissioner would make the functions of the similar CSCE commissioner more concrete as applicable to the Baltic region, taking its specific features and unique experience into account.

The Russian delegate recalled that last year the Danish foreign minister appealed in Copenhagen for assistance to Russia to help the Russian servicemen leaving the Baltic states find housing and jobs. Bringing forward the dates of the final troop withdrawals depends directly on the resolution of this problem, and the Council could make its own contribution here, by calling on the interested states and private organizations to set up an assistance fund for the Russian servicemen who have or are about to be resettled.

Russia, along with a number of other countries in the region are interested in finding additional sources of financing—whether in the forms of credits, or investments. In this particular case, the point revolves around plans to rebuild Kaliningrad roads and ports and to effect conversion of St. Petersburg defense enterprises. Russia, noted the Russian delegation member in conclusion, places great hopes on the Baltic Council "as a way out for our northwestern regions to attain international targets directly." It therefore appears expedient to set up, within the Baltic Council framework, a regional council of representatives of administrations of Baltic oblasts.

Kozyrev Cuts Visit Short, Returns to Moscow

LD1603134193 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1306 GMT 16 Mar 93

[By ITAR-TASS special correspondents Aleksandr Surikov and Georgiy Shmelev]

[Text] Helsinki, 16 Mar (ITAR-TASS)—Russian Foreign Minister Andrey Kozyrev is flying out of Helsinki today at President Boris Yeltsin's urgent request to take part in the talks with President of France Francois Mitterrand. He is expected to return to Helsinki tomorrow to take part in the meeting of the Baltic States Council, which is continuing, journalists were told by his political adviser Galina Sidorova. She said that Andrey Kozyrev has asked to speak at the very beginning of the Council meeting, outside of the agenda, and that he has made it understood that Russia might not sign the final document of the meeting unless a reliable means is drawn up of ensuring the rights of individuals and national minorities in the Baltic countries.

The Russian foreign minister pointed out to the participants in the meeting that in his opinion the current agenda does not reflect the full seriousness of the issue of human rights and the increasing threat of aggressive nationalism. He believes it is essential to create the post of commissioner for human rights and national minorities, and that this should be placed either on the agenda or in the final document.

Finland's Foreign Minister Paavo Vayrynen, who is presiding at the meeting, said that he understands Russia's concern and is willing to postpone debate of the issue so that the Russian foreign minister can take part.

Speaks 'Earlier Than Planned'

OW1603145993 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1434 GMT 16 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Russia's Foreign Minister, Andrey Kozyrev, who came to Helsinki to attend the 2nd ministerial session of the Council of Baltic Sea Countries, is leaving for Moscow urgently to join the talks between President Boris Yeltsin and the French President, Francois Mitterrand. Interfax's special correspondent Dmitriy Voskoboynikov, who is accompanying the foreign minister, learned this from Galina Sidorova, political adviser to the head of Russian diplomacy.

Kozyrev asked participants in the session to let him speak earlier than planned. Russia is not satisfied with the agenda of the session, he said. According to him, the agenda fails to reflect "the acuteness" that characterizes the human rights situation in a number of local countries at the moment.

Kozyrev made it clear that, unless the Helsinki forum works out an effective mechanism for combating aggressive nationalism and controlling human rights observance, Moscow might decline to sign the final communique of the Helsinki session.

If such a mechanism fails to be worked out, the Russian foreign minister said, this will encourage the pseudonationalist forces that are seeking to incite passions on post-communist territory.

As Finland's Foreign Minister, Paavo Vyayuryunen, who is chairing the session, said after Kozyrev's speech, participants in the session are prepared to understand Russia's concern, and therefore will postpone discussions on the 5th point of the agenda, which deals with human rights, until Wednesday, to enable Foreign Minister Kozyrev to speak on this issue in person.

Andrey Kozyrev is expected to return to Helsinki Tuesday evening or Wednesday morning.

(Automatic embargo till 17:00 [1400 GMT]) Russia wants the Council of Baltic Sea Countries to serve as an effective mechanism for assisting local democratic institutions, such as those designed to protect human rights and ethnic minorities. This is stated in a report of the Russian Foreign Minister, Andrey Kozyrev, for the 2nd ministerial session of the Council which opened in Helsinki on Tuesday [16 March]. Because of his urgent departure for Moscow, Kozyrev's report was read by a member of the Russian delegation.

As the report says, Russia's stand is explained by the circumstance, that now in the post-communist part of the world, including Russia, "all reactionary and revanchist forces are rallying under the banners of aggressive nationalism and chauvinism.

Russia calls for establishing in the framework of the Council as soon as possible the post of commissioner for human rights and ethnic minorities who would analyse the present situation and determine the ways to combat this phenomenon. In Moscow's view, in contrast to the CSCE commissioner, his colleague in the Council of Baltic Sea Countries could engage in considering concrete appeals from individuals and groups of citizens.

The report says that the Council could also urge all interested countries and private organizations to set up a special fund of support for Russian servicemen who are to be resettled. This would be conducive to drawing nearer the time of the final withdrawal of troops from the Baltic countries.

Besides, Moscow calls for finding additional sources of financing concrete economic projects in the region. Russia, for instance, is interested in projects designed to reconstruct roads and ports in Kaliningrad and convert St.Petersburg's defense plants.

The Russian foreign minister's report includes one more proposal: set up in the framework of the Council of Baltic Sea Countries a regional council of spokesmen for the administrations of Baltic Sea areas. Moscow hopes very much that the north-western areas of Russia will have direct ties with their foreign neighbors.

Talks With Finland's Koivisto

LD1603223493 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 2124 GMT 16 Mar 93

[by ITAR-TASS special correspondents Aleksandr Surikov and Georgiy Shmelev]

[Text] Helsinki March 16 TASS—A meeting between Finnish President Mauno Koivisto and Russian Foreign Minister Andrey Kozyrev took place in Helsinki today. During the talk Koivisto voiced hope that relations of cooperation with Russia, a neighbouring country, will continue to develop.

He emphasised that the activity of the Council of the Baltic Sea States, which currently meets in session in Helsinki, is of immense importance to strengthening international partnership in the Baltic region.

Koivisto also pointed to the importance of the forthcoming Russian-American summit due to take place in Vancouver in April.

Not To Return for Meeting

LD1603235393 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 2326 GMT 16 Mar 93

[Report by ITAR-TASS diplomatic correspondent Georgiy Shmelev]

[Text] Moscow, 17 Mar—Russian Federation Foreign Minister Andrey Kozyrev will not be returning to Helsinki to take part in the work of the second session of the Council of Baltic States, as had been thought earlier. An ITAR-TASS correspondent has learned this from reliable sources. As has already been announced, the Russian minister left urgently for Moscow on Tuesday [16 March] at the request of Russian President Boris Yeltsin in order to attend talks with French President Francois Mitterrand.

An ITAR-TASS correspondent has also learned that Andrey Kozyrev's previously announced working visit to Finland will not take place either.

Shaposhnikov Meets NATO Commander Paul Miller

LD1603155893 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1435 GMT 16 Mar 93

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Sergey Ostankin]

[Text] Moscow, 16 Mar (ITAR-TASS)—Wide-ranging contacts and links between the CIS states and NATO, the structures of the Supreme Command of the CIS Joint Armed Forces and military and political bodies of the North Atlantic Union play an important role in strengthening the atmosphere of trust and mutual understanding, and movement toward cooperation for the sake of stability and peace in Europe and the whole world. The

ITAR-TASS correspondent was told at the public information center of the CIS Joint Armed Forces Headquarters that this was the subject of today's meeting between Marshal of Aviation Yevgeniy Shaposhnikov, commander in chief of the CIS Joint Armed Forces, and Admiral Paul Miller, NATO's supreme allied commander Atlantic, who is in Moscow on an official visit.

It was pointed out during their meeting that thanks to a consistent elimination of confrontational stereotypes created during the decades of the Cold War, the prerequisites for effective implementation of international security are becoming wider and stronger. The system of collective security within the CIS as an important component of the global system of security, is called on to play an important role in creating such prerequisites.

'Broader Contacts' Welcomed

OW1603150193 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1432 GMT 16 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Supreme Commander of the CIS Armed Forces, Marshal Shaposhnikov and NATO's Supreme Commander in the Atlantic, Admiral Paul Miller, stated during their talks in Moscow on Tuesday [16 March] that the elimination of confrontational stereotypes, shaped over decades of cold war, helped enhance the efficiency of international security. Admiral Miller noted that the system of CIS security was an important component in the international system of security, and would play an important role in enhancing its efficiency.

Shaposhnikov and Miller also welcomed broader contacts between the CIS and NATO for building trust and increasing mutual understanding, and for establishing cooperation for the sake of stability and security in Europe and in the rest of the world.

'Collective Security' System Discussed

OW1703122393 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1117 GMT 17 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Supreme Commander of the CIS Joint Armed Forces, Marshal Yevgeniy Shaposhnikov, is convinced that the West would welcome the creation of a system of collective security in the CIS. "I can judge this from my talks with NATO colleagues John Shalikashvili and Admiral Paul Miller," he told representatives of the Russian parliament and Foreign Ministry, and of the CIS countries' embassies and permanent missions in Moscow.

The participants in the meeting stated that the CIS military alliance should be defense-oriented so as not to cause new global confrontation. Moreover, the main accent should be put on political activity, above all on the evaluation of political consequences of military decisions, and on the drafting of a single military technical policy and recommendations.

Shaposhnikov announced that the problem of manufacturing military equipment, complicated by the growing disintegration of the CIS states, would be solved soon. He said for instance, that components for MiG-29 aircraft were produced by more than 560 enterprises, 520 of which are located in Russia.

Shaposhnikov pins great hopes on the inter-state commission for coordinating the military-technical policy which will be set up in accordance with the decision taken by the Council of the heads of the CIS governments on March 12. He also announced that in April, a conference involving the general designers and leaders of arms industries would be held in Russia.

Army Will Not 'Play With Politics'

LD1703122893 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1217 GMT 17 Mar 93

[Text] Moscow March 17 TASS—"The army should abide by the laws. It is not going to play with politics," Marshal Yevgeniy Shaposhnikov, commander-in-chief of the CIS Allied Armed Forces, said, addressing staff members of the LITERATURNAYA GAZETA editorial office. A report on their meeting is published by the newspaper today.

"In accordance with the Alma-Ata agreements, two people—Yeltsin and Shaposhnikov—now have access to the nuclear button," Shaposhnikov said, responding to the question about the extent to which they are now controlling the nuclear forces of Ukraine, Belarus and Kazakhstan. "Other presidents have a hotline at their disposal, by which they can quickly hold consultations."

"Belarus quickly met its commitments and transferred its nuclear weapons to Russian jurisdiction. Kazakhstan's stand is similar to that of Belarus," Shaposhnikov continued. He described as "strange" the stand assumed by Ukraine: "On the one hand, they say that they seek a nuclear-free status. On the other hand, they keep nuclear weapons. I think, this is the result of the fact that some forces at the Ukrainian parliament believe, for no apparent reason, that the grandeur and importance of their country depend on whether or not Ukraine will possess Ukrainian nuclear weapons. There are few who are worried about the amount of money to be spent on those weapons, about the fulfilment of commitments assumed before and about the fact that by the year 2000 all those weapons will be not only dangerous, but also impossible to be used because they would become obsolete."

In a new situation "we should not have curbed arms manufacturing, but should have expanded it and exported the weapons on condition that they would not be used against us," Shaposhnikov believes. "Our weapons have always been in demand. The revenues coming from this source should have been spent on the creation of production lines for turning out consumer goods."

Shaposhnikov Addresses Meeting of CIS Representatives

LD1703100193 Moscow Radio Rossii Network in Russian 0900 GMT 17 Mar 93

[Text] Our correspondent reports that a working meeting of representatives from the Russian Federation's Supreme Soviet and Ministry of Foreign Affairs and from embassies and permanent missions of Commonwealth states in Russia, scholars, generals and officers of the High Command, and representatives of the Armed Forces of the CIS countries is taking place at this very moment at the High Command of the CIS Joint Armed Forces. The participants plan to discuss the problems of and prospects for creating a system of military security and collective defense of the Commonwealth member-states. This is what Yevgeniy Shaposhnikov, commander in chief of the CIS Joint Armed Forces, said when opening the conference:

[Begin Shaposhnikov recording] If we look a little ahead beyond the year 2000, then it should be said—and one would not be mistaken—that the following centers of power could arise on the planet. The first is the United States of America, the second is Western Europe, the third is Japan, and the fourth is China. This expanse between Western Europe to the west and China and Japan to the east will also probably have some kind of center of power. And of course, if we continue to disperse, separate, quarrel and argue, and so on and so forth, then there are probably grounds for believing that a black hole could well form in this expanse. To prevent such a black hole emerging, there probably needs to be some center of power here also, and not so much in order to set itself up against either the West or the East as to ensure that there is a balance of forces. [end recording]

Article Views Heads of Government Meeting

PM1603143993 Moscow ROSSIYSKIYE VESTI in Russian 16 Mar 93 p 2

[Igor Sukhanov report: "New Common Market?"]

[Text] A session of the CIS Council of Heads of Government ended in Moscow Friday with the signing of 17 documents.

The premiers' Moscow meeting undoubtedly justified all hopes.

First, the premiers actually proved that the governments have begun operating regardless of the constant fluctuations in the political situation in the states on the territory of the former USSR. At the final news conference Russian Premier Viktor Chernomyrdin, who came to the council session straight from the "hell" of the Eighth Congress of Russian Federation People's Deputies, resolutely emphasized: The problems being tackled within the CIS framework do not depend on the political situation in the various Commonwealth states, and "the heads of government present here have proved that our governments continue to work regardless of political changes."

The general sentiment of the heads of government for constructive cooperation in the economic sphere is also eloquently indicated by the fact that it was proposed that Moldovan Prime Minister Andrei Sangheli chair the council session. (I will remind you that only a few months ago, under the former leader of parliament, Moldova refused categorically to participate in any measures whatever within the CIS framework.) By entrusting the post of chairman to their Moldovan colleague, the premiers unambiguously emphasized that they are ready to receive into their circle the leaders of the governments of all the republics which once made up the Soviet Union.

Second, to touch on the substance of the meeting, the following fact is gratifying: All 16 items included on the agenda were examined in the space of one day. Accords were reached on the establishment of the Interstate Council on Questions of Protecting Industrial Property and the Coordinating Council of the Interstate Television and Radio Company.

The participants in the council session were in no doubt about the need for a joint struggle against organized crime, the coordination of antimonopoly policy, and cooperation in the defense sphere—the Interstate Commission on Military-Technical Cooperation will evidently be set up within the CIS framework.

The economy was the chief topic in the discussion, and precisely this fact predetermined the successful outcome of the council session. To all appearances, a strong economic union not inferior to the Common Market will emerge in the near future within the borders of the former USSR.

Answering a question about the prospects for development in the CIS, Kazakhstani Prime Minister Sergey Tereshchenko pointed out that he is convinced that the production slump will end sooner or later, and then all the states on the territory of the former Union will be faced with the need for close economic cooperation.

After all the documents of the Moscow meeting had been signed, Leonid Kuchma, Ukrainian head of government, told journalists: Kiev advocates "a single economic union, which must be created the sooner the better."

The date and place of the next session of the CIS Council of Heads of Government were decided on at the Moscow meeting. It will be held in Yerevan 30 April 1993. The economic topic of cooperation will evidently be continued there, since one of the chief questions which it is planned to submit for the premiers' approval is the draft statute on the Commonwealth Consultative Coordinating Committee. As a preliminary, this document will be examined in Minsk 30 March.

Heads of State To Meet in Yerevan in April

LD1603155293 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1542 GMT 16 Mar 93

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent]

[Text] Moscow March 16 TASS—The press secretary of the CIS's working group Yevgeniy Gorelik confirmed to ITAR-TASS today that a meeting of the Commonwealth heads of state will take place in Yerevan in late April as planned.

He pointed out preparations for the summit are in full swing: experts are at work and the agenda is being shaped.

At the recent Moscow meeting of the CIS heads of government and states, Armenian Prime Minister Grant Bagratyan emphasised that the republic "is ready to do everything for the meeting of the CIS heads of state to pass at the worthy level."

ITAR-TASS Carries Press Review for 17 Mar

LD1703073593 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 0610 GMT 17 Mar 93

["Press Review"—ITAR-TASS headline]

[Text] Moscow March 17 ITAR-TASS—The results of the 8th Congress of People's Deputies continue to be in the focus of attention of Moscow newspapers.

ROSSIISKIE VESTI quotes Sergey Shakhray as saying that the congress weakened Russia. He said the Security Council would meet today to discuss the tactics to be used and the political priorities in the current situation. Commenting on the results of the congress, ROSSIISKIE VESTI describes it as a "collective dictatorship of the legislative body." Mikhail Kolesnikov, the author of the commentary, believes that "the political foundation of the economic reform has been very much destroyed by the congress." The newspaper carries an article by Mikhail Fedotov, Russian minister of press and information, who described as "absolutely illegal" the attempts of the legislators to subordinate mass media organs to them. The minister pointed out, however, that, most probably, the attempts would be continued.

ROSSIISKIE VESTI carries a number of short interviews with well- known historians and lawyers, who substantiate from the historial and legal points of view the need for Russia to become a presidential republic.

NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA believes that the Congress of People's Deputies actually made the first step towards the disintegration of Russia, following the example of the USSR which disintegrated as a result of the "Belovezhsky agreement", and describes it as the main result of the congress. "There is no telling what forms, pace and consequences the 'Belovezhsky process' will have in Russia. However, everybody, including the president, the parliament and numerous claimants to the first and secondary roles are ready to use the strengthening of the regions for furthering their political aims," the newspaper writes.

PRAVDA publishes an article entitled "Politicians Are Again Playing With the Will of the People", which points to the similarity between the disintegration of the USSR and a possible disintegration of Russia. The article actually supports the decision to cancel the referendum. In the opinion of PRAVDA, the 1993 plebiscite may lead to the disintegration of Russia.

TRUD gives wide coverage to the official visit to Moscow of President Francois Mitterrand of France, making special mention of his words at the joint press conference with President Yeltsin, that "France will support Russia's actions, so that it will be able to find a way out of the existing situation, and its democratic foundation will remain intact." At the same time, the newspaper stresses President Yeltsin's words at the press conference that "the results of the congress evoke serious concern."

NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA carries an interview with Russian Prosecutor- General Valentin Stepankov, who pointed out, among other things, that "the existing legislation is way behind times" and the situation can be improved with the help of "clear strategy and a solid legal foundation."

KRASNAYA ZVEZDA publishes an interview with Colonel Alibek Kasymov, chief of staff and first deputy defence minister of Kazakhstan. He told about the fulfilment by Kazakhstan of the treaty on collective security within the CIS framework. He stressed as well that the recently created Kazakh army "is already becoming a reliable defender of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Republic." Kasymov expressed confidence in the "strength of the Kazakh military link" within the framework of the CIS collective security system.

All newspapers report another worsening of the situation in Abkhazia, where Abkhazian units attacked Georgian positions near Sukhumi. Newspapers write about Tbilisi's plans to announce general mobilisation soon and about new accusations, hurled by the Georgian leaders at the Russian troops deployed in Abkhazia. In the opinion of the Georgian leadership, the Russian Army is interfering in the conflict.

Kozyrev To Discuss Yeltsin's Appeal to CIS Leaders

LD1703095793 Moscow Mayak Radio Network in Russian 0930 GMT 17 Mar 93

[Text] Russian Foreign Minister Andrey Kozyrev will hold a news conference at 1500 [1200 GMT], Mayak has been told at the press centre of the Russian Foreign Ministry. We were also reminded that Russia's foreign minister had not returned to Helsinki from Moscow yesterday to attend the proceedings of the second session of the Council of Baltic Sea States, contrary to earlier expectations. It has become known that Andrey Kozyrev will not go ahead with his official visit to Finland.

The reasons behind these decisions will probably be disclosed at the news conference. The topic will be Russian Federation President Boris Yeltsin's address to the CIS heads of state.

'Text' of Appeal

LD1703120293 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1100 GMT 17 Mar 93

[Text] Moscow, 17 Mar—The following is the full text of the appeal by Russia's President Boris Yeltsin to the heads of state of the CIS member states:

In connection with the preparations for the next meeting of the top CIS leaders, I would like to express a few thoughts about the real prospects for the further development of the CIS.

Russia confirms anew its determined support for the Commonwealth. While laying no claim to a "leading" role in it, we realize our responsibility for ensuring that we cooperate closely and on an equal basis with all the independent states in the interests of economic and social recovery, in order to secure the stability and security in our common geopolitical space which each of us so need.

We are convinced that only by joint efforts can the independent states emerge from their difficulties and tribulations.

First and foremost, we need realistic instruments to eliminate "trouble spots" and prevent the outbreak of fresh hotbeds of tension. Such mechanisms, including collective peacekeeping forces, ought to be started up as soon as possible. International experience of peacekeeping operations, and especially direct support for our joint efforts by the UN, the CSCE, and other organizations, will also be useful here.

In my opinion, we should really strive to set up an effective security system within the CIS, which would become an important factor in sustaining peace in the entire Euro-Asian region. Pulling together the efforts in this area would also allow each state to cut its defense spending while keeping the necessary level of security.

Likewise, Russia favors closer interaction in external policy, and coordination of the positions taken by Commonwealth member-states on very important questions of international affairs. We favor further cooperation between our diplomatic services, and a firm defense of the common interests of CIS member-states.

We in Russia believe that one very important aspect of cooperation is joint protection of the generally accepted international human rights against manifestations of aggressive nationalism. The Russian Federation guarantees all its citizens equal rights and freedoms, regardless of their ethnic origin or other differences, and strives to create the necessary conditions to preserve and develop the languages, as well as the cultural and religious individuality, of the nations populating it. It goes without saying that we count on both Russians and Russian-speaking populations living in other states to be granted similar rights. I think the world community will react positively to the clear and firm position taken by all CIS member-states on this very acute problem, which will largely determine our cooperation in other spheres, including the economic sphere.

The past year has confirmed the pressing need to undertake more energetically our multilateral economic cooperation. It is no secret that the current state of affairs in virtually all our countries and the real economic potential of individual states means that we cannot rely on getting out of the crisis solely by our own efforts. A joining of effort—both within the framework of the Commonwealth and on a bilateral basis—will greatly increase the effect of the reforms and changes being carried out. It will be easier to overcome the present crisis jointly.

In the new conditions, we also need new forms of cooperation, for instance, the setting up of transnational associations in the various branches of industry, agriculture, electric power, transport, and services. The laying down of horizontal links, joint activity in production and investment, and the formation of joint customs systems and free trade zones will help us stabilize the economic situation, shape a single economic space, and, in the long term, move toward a common market.

I consider it necessary to draw attention to the fact that without a more precise organizational format, without the creation of bodies for the voluntary coordination of activities, our Commonwealth will remain too amorphous a formation and will be unable to justify the hopes placed in it. Although more than 270 agreements and treaties have already been drawn up, many of them exist on paper only, since the instruments for their implementation have not properly been put into effect.

At the Minsk meeting, the heads of CIS member-states adopted a Charter, thus making an important step to turning the Commonwealth into a functioning mechanism of effective and mutually beneficial cooperation. However, this may also fail to have the desired result if we delay with putting it into action. In this respect, particular responsibility today lies with the Supreme Soviets of our countries and the interparliamentary Assembly.

I believe that we possess all the opportunities to turn the Commonwealth into an effective association of sovereign partners with equal rights, based on a commonality of interests and voluntary participation in various forms of cooperation.

French President Mitterrand on Official Visit

Presidents Hold News Conference

LD1603180193 Moscow Radio Rossii Network in Russian 1425 GMT 16 Mar 93

[News conference by Russian President Boris Yeltsin and French President Francois Mitterrand with an unidentified moderator and unidentified foreign and domestic correspondents at the Kremlin in Moscow; Mitterrand speaks in French with superimposed translation into Russian—live, broadcast in progress]

[Text] [Moderator] ...journalists, guests, diplomats. Let me on your behalf welcome our official guests, French President Francois Mitterrand and Russian President Boris Nikolayevich Yeltsin. We will now begin our brief—I would like to make it clear that unfortunately we do not have much time, about 30 minutes—news conference devoted to the official visit by the president of France to Russia. Russian President Boris Nikolayevich Yeltsin is called on to deliver a brief statement.

[Yeltsin] Esteemed Mr. President, esteemed ladies and gentlemen! This is the reciprocal visit by the president of the Republic of France to Russia. As you recall, my visit to France has taken place. It achieved a major breakthrough in our relations. A treaty on friendship and cooperation between the two states was signed, the first for over two centuries. On the basis of that treaty and a number of agreements signed at that time in France, a total of 33 documents have now been signed on cooperation between us in various fields. These questions include the safe disposal of nuclear weapons, space, science and technology, our economic and financial ties, the former Soviet Union's external debts, and the exchange of archives that are of interest to both French and Russian scholars.

I personally regard today's visit by the president of France as a very important and, above all, timely step in view of the fact that the Congress of People's Deputies has just taken place. In this way the president of France is giving a signal of his support for the forces of reform and democracy, for the president, and so on.

Furthermore, we needed to take stock of the way the agreements and treaties signed since the last visit are being implemented. We have done this. The talks were private, one-on-one. We were subsequently joined by the full delegations.

We have already, in France, held talks in a very friendly atmosphere, a sincere atmosphere, understanding each other. We have now held similar talks. We touched upon international issues, the two flashpoints of Yugoslavia and Nagorno-Karabakh. We also discussed the summit in Vancouver on April between Mr. Clinton and myself, and a possible subsequent meeting of the G-7 leaders immediately after the summit; that is, in early April before their Tokyo meeting in order to urgently discuss Russia's problems and how to help Russia with its reforms. Thank you.

[Moderator] Thank you, Boris Nikolayevich...

[Yeltsin, interrupting] Excuse me, I would like to say that I am very satisfied with these talks and the meeting, the atmosphere, and the decisions on all the issues that we discussed. On the whole there is no issue that we have discussed and that remains unresolved.

[Moderator] I call French President Mitterrand, please.

[Mitterrand] I just want to add a few words. At the end of President Yeltsin's state visit to France, we agreed that a similar meeting of that kind would be held here in Russia. Up to now we have not had time for this. Circumstances prevented this from happening earlier. But our visit, which will only last a few hours, has now given us an opportunity to review the main questions, the main events. Naturally the main questions included, among others, the former Yugoslavia, the situation in Bosnia-Hercegovina, in Armenia, in Nagorno-Karabakh, and, of course, questions connected with the internal situation in Russia itself.

President Yeltsin kindly spoke about his perception of problems and questions which have arisen here. Furthermore we discussed what the democratic states should do in the way of economic assistance, what they should do to assist economic recovery in Russia—both economic and political recovery, of course—so that democratic forces, forces advocating reform, win this struggle. Naturally, I do not intend to interfere in the internal politics of this state, but these problems affect the whole of Europe.

There are other problems too. One such problem is the question of whether Russia has fully embarked on the road of democratic reform or whether this has not yet happened. That is the very point of the struggle which President Yeltsin is now waging. As far as these problems are concerned, I noted that from the outset France has advocated holding a G-7 meeting before the Tokyo meeting, a meeting which we have not yet held. I am referring to a meeting of heads of state and government. President Yeltsin and President Clinton have agreed that they will meet in April in one country or another, in one city or another. This meeting will probably take place soon.

Earlier they had agreed that senior officials should meet to arrange a meeting of heads of state of the Seven. In fact there will be eight of these musketeers, since there will be a representative of the EC, Jacques Delors. So, even if this meeting shows that there will be some disagreement, the meeting should still take place. I have already said this to President Clinton. I said that I am prepared to take part in the preparation of such a conference, which would not have any absolutely concrete, single objective or goal. This

meeting could be held in April, in order to discuss ways in which we could assist recovery in Russia and the reliable implementation of reform.

Naturally, this involves quite a few problems. All the leaders will raise such problems, but here everybody should display political will. Other problems remain outstanding. They were touched on during the recent meeting of finance ministers. The Russian plan for debt repayment was presented there. All these questions, if tabled at one and the same conference, could provide an opportunity to discuss ways in which various democracies, democratic states, could take extra steps. Many are ready for this. At all events they will say what they think of this, what their plans are for the immediate future.

As for Yugoslavia—maybe you will ask me questions about Yugoslavia. I don't want to speak for long. I don't want to drag out my introductory remarks. The same applies to Armenia.

We exchanged views on other questions. I don't think you will get the impression that we wasted our time. I just wanted to explain to you, in brief, the main things that we discussed. I would like to thank Mr. Yeltsin for the opportunity to hold talks. France, it goes without saying, wants democracy to be victorious in Russia. It also wants political and economic reform to be victorious. Thank you.

[Moderator] And now we embark on a brief session of questions and answers. Dominique Bromberger, as you are our guest, the first question is yours.

[Bromberger] Mr. President, how do you intend to deal with the attacks mounted on you at the congress, and with the curbs on your powers that have been forced upon you? I should also like to put a question to President Mitterand. The support he voiced for President Yeltsin, will it be maintained even if the Russian president is forced to take tougher measures?

[Yeltsin] First of all, one should probably give at least a brief characteristic to the congress, to what happened. Naturally, the outcome of the congress gives ground for serious apprehension. Instead of settling the constitutional crisis, the congress deepened it. It is regrettable that the congress haughtily denied the people the opportunity to vote in a referendum. I can see that democracy and reforms are under a most serious threat. One can discern an attempt to restore the communist Soviet regime. In my capacity as president, I am currently studying the situation, so that decisions are taken not in the heat of the moment in the wake of the congress. I am studying the scale of political detriment incurred by the congress to the constitutional state structure of the Russian Federation. After I complete this study I shall be able to speak about measures.

[Moderator] A question from the Russian press. Who is the first? Oh, I apologize, Mr. President.

[Mitterrand] I simply would like to say that Mr. Bromberger has come up with all possible alternatives. In the final analysis, however, there will be only one option, only one choice, and I don't know how things will turn out then. Time will prompt us what to do. I believe Mr. Yeltsin has a certain framework which allows him to put forward proposals for the Russian people. I believe he will do it in a democratic way, and that the situation will, or must be sorted out within the next few weeks, or maybe the next few months.

France will encourage Russia, will help Russia pull itself out of this situation, preserving its democratic foundation intact. Evidently, if we did not have to choose between different camps, or sides which divide Russia, then it would be quite natural for us to wish success to those who have entered a democratic path.

[Moderator] Vladimir Markov, please.

[Markov] I am from the new RUSSIAN INFORMATION AGENCY. Boris Nikolayevich, after all, today's conversation is being held in the new situation which has emerged after the congress. What is your view today of the problems of international cooperation which will be discussed at the meetings expected to take place, such as the G-7 meeting, your meeting with President Clinton? What importance do you attach today to cooperation with the rest of the world?

[Yeltsin] I think that, speaking about plans, our foreign policy remains the same, it will not change. But I think that, however, the congress will make itself felt in contacts with G-7 heads of state and others, since the possibility of restoration has, I think, greatly alarmed heads of state and they will not be so long in taking decisions on the issues which can be solved in literally a few weeks or months. For almost a year we have not been able to solve the issue of deferring the former Union's debt. These are the Paris and London Clubs. Also there are a number of other issues, for instance, the issues of giving credits through the IMF. So the current situation in Russia will speed up, after all, the process of all our foreign political actions, both from our side and, I believe, from that of our partners.

[Moderator, in French with superimposed Russian translation] There is the French saying Cherchez la femme, so I am looking for a French woman journalist. Where is the glorified French democracy? Are there women among the French journalists?

[Mitterrand] Yes, you know, it is only recently that French women got a franchise.

[Unidentified French woman journalist] I would like to put a question to President Yeltsin. I would like to know if we can expect serious changes in the cabinet of ministers in the next few weeks or days.

[Yeltsin] Well, what do you mean by serious? The replacement of half of them? No, of course not. However, there will be individual changes in the cabinet of

ministers or the Council of Ministers. But these will be individual cases which have been long planned, before the congress. They are not the product of the congress, but simply the product of their unsatisfactory work. This might be three, might be four, might be five people.

[Moderator] Grishchenko, please.

[Grishchenko] A question for President Mitterrand, from INTERFAX. I would like to ask the president to give us his point of view on the following: Did today's conversation with Boris Nikolayevich Yeltsin give him the feeling that it is necessary to use France's great authority so the world community might be more actively involved in supporting Russian reforms? And most likely Boris Nikolayevich for his part would also give his opinion, for it has become obvious that without that support our reforms will now come up against ever greater obstacles. So how would both presidents look at this problem? Thank you.

[Mitterrand] The Western powers who are members of the G7 do not have an equal approach to what kind of conference it should be at which the participating countries will gather. To this one must add the particular position of Japan, which will be the chairman of that conference and is organizing the conference this year, and which does not want any preliminary meetings before the summit meeting in Tokyo. So of course the meeting in Tokyo is being delayed and is running late while Russia's problems are urgent; they are urgent considering the need for their adoption. [sentence as heard]

Therefore, I have expressed the wish, as in general has Jacques Delors—the chairman of the European Community—that the states making up the G7 should meet in the very near future. The opportunities of the meeting between Presidents Clinton and Yeltsin on 4 April makes it possible for us to consider that at the next stage—after, of course, the discussion by the two presidents of the problems of weapons, strategic weapons, which concern only them, of course, in this specific case—so that after this it may be possible to get down to talks about the aid that could be given to Russia, in order to strengthen still further her efforts toward democratic reforms, both in the political and economic planes. That is France's approach—I can only say it to you again by saying that we must manage to convince our partners. Of course, some of them are restricting the level of their countries' representation to, so to say, technical ministers. This seems to me to be insufficient since the theme of the meeting, of the conference, is connected with a fundamental political choice. I am not speaking of course of the internal restructuring of Russia—that is a purely Russian matter—I am speaking about Russia's moving forward along the path of democracy and not retreating from it.

So perhaps soon, in April, there will be a meeting of the representatives of eight states—in any event, it will be a meeting of those who wish to meet, those who wish to have their say on this matter. It seems to me that this is a very important meeting. I wish to stress that I have spoken about this to President Clinton, I have spoken about this to Chancellor Kohl, and I will speak to others, saying that this is an initiative that puts France under great obligations—but we cannot do more than we are able. President Yeltsin seemed to agree with such a proposal. At least he did not reject it. Well, let us see what will happen in the next few days before 4 April.

[Yeltsin] I would also like to reply to the second part of your question. Er, not only is this support necessary today, but the support is a matter of timing. If we wait until the Tokyo meeting—that is, June and July—it may turn out to be too late. Therefore the initiative and efforts of French President Mitterrand, in this respect, are very valuable.

[Moderator] Now a question from the French side, please.

[Correspondent, in French with subsequent translation into Russian] In Washington you had a meeting with President Clinton and later in Paris with [Serbian President Slobodan] Milosevic, and now you are in Moscow. After all these meetings, do you get the impression that the international community can cope with the situation in Yugoslavia?

[Mitterrand] The first measure I regard necessary is to lend more authority, more power, to the Vance-Owen plan. Dividing Bosnia-Hercegovina into 10 provinces is certainly not an ideal plan. The problem is very delicate, but we know nothing better. At least it is a sensible foundation for achieving peace. I discussed the subject with Mr. Clinton. You know what his first reaction was. But last week in Washington I got a feeling that he agreed to this sort of approach. I have recently received a request from Vance and Owen, who asked me to take the initiative to organize a meeting with President Milosevic, in order to discuss with him the possibility of persuading Bosnian Serbs and Serbia in general to join the plan. Naturally I agreed, I said yes. Because the most important thing is to achieve a peaceful settlement. The most obvious measure for this is what I have mentioned. In the course of the meeting, some progress was made in the afternoon. I proposed that both parties at the talks and Mr. Milosevic should meet. The meeting did go ahead at the French Foreign Ministry. After a working lunch they were having together, I too joined the participants. The point of view of Owen and Vance was explained to them in detail, and it seemed to me that the ball started rolling. Now the responsibility for the initiative lies with them. I believe, and this will be reflected in the communique, that Russia also shares my feelings that the Vance- Owen plan is a sensible foundation for everyone to move in the same direction.

[Moderator] A question from Vasiliy Kononenko of IZVESTIYA.

[Kononenko] My question is to Mr. Francois Mitterrand and Mr. Boris Yeltsin. In recent years the integration of Russia into the world community, politically and economically I mean, has been rapid. As a result of the

eighth congress, the political situation has changed. Do you think there is a danger of this process being frozen?

[Mitterrand] My reply would be very much less accurate than what Mr. Yeltsin could say, but anyway, as far as events are concerned, after the congress, as far as the confrontation between President Yeltsin and the congress is concerned, where does Russia stand? I think he will have a more precise assessment of this situation. I am, however, an optimist and I do not think that anything could erase the progress that has occurred since the period of stagnation. In any case, I do think that we have to influence events. For myself, I do not wish to interfere in Russia's internal events, I think that accord between the states on aid to Russia along the road Russia has chosen will be fundamental.

[Yeltsin] My point of view: I think that what we are accustomed to call the Western world, the Western countries, up until the eighth congress did not see the reality of revanche in Russia. It was only the eighth congress that demonstrated that this revanche was real, if they, among others, fail to take particular measures to support the reforms and democracy in Russia. Now, instead of slowing it, on the contrary, this process will be made more dynamic—our integration.

[Moderator] Our allotted time has practically run out, but out of respect for our French journalist guests, I am prepared to grant one more question. Please, go ahead.

[Unidentified French journalist] For Yeltsin, what, specifically, does he expect from Western countries? What kind of aid does he expect from Western countries? Financial aid, yes, that is clear, but in what areas, in which priority sectors? Some Western countries have a somewhat restrained attitude to this, saying that the Russian economy is disorganized, that corruption is rife, and many are afraid that this money will go into a bottomless well. What may be said in response to this concern?

[Yeltsin] I will respond. I am not saying that there is no corruption in other countries. So, as for specific areas, first, there is finances - financial support. I have already said that the contribution to the destruction of nuclear weapons... [changes thought] Despite the fact that perhaps not all the documents have been put together, we have nevertheless already started disarmament and the destruction of nuclear missiles, and every month the president has a report on how many such misiles have been destroyed. That is, their overall number is not increasing but decreasing, but their destruction is a very heavy technical task, and let's say that for this reason, France has demonstrated initiative in helping in this issue, and some other countries too.

And then, space matters, matters of science and technology, matters of direct investment, direct. For example on credits, France, with regard to the IMF, should give 8.5 billion francs. If this sum is given not on credit, but under direct investments, then it would be assimilated in Russia more quickly. Significantly more quickly.

And then, on social matters, on health. Matters of elaborating and restoring neglected oil and gas wells. This major work, many French firms are already doing this work. Then, the Aerospatiale Company; joint work is under way for completing helicopters which we need to harness gas and oil wells.

We also welcome the fact that, taking account of the fact that we have signed the convention on the destruction of chemical weapons, there is enormous work ahead in destroying these weapons. We have accumulated these several times over and above what all the countries in the world would require. Finances are needed to destroy this too. It is impossible to accumulate it any more. Here is an area. And the area of economic cooperation in other sectors—transport, power engineering, railway transport, roads and so on.

In short, the areas of such support of the reforms, really is not, you are right, not just financing pure and simple, although this is also required in order for us to tackle our debts today, but inasmuch as the debts issue is unresolved—or rather the rescheduling of the debts to be more precise—in 1993 we have to pay $2.5 billion, debts of the former Union. For us, this is an extremely difficult task and without direct financial aid in this regard, we may find ourselves quite simply on the brink of an abyss.

Meanwhile the forces of revanche are speculating on the fact that people live badly, on the difficulties, and so on and so forth, as if they themselves had absolutely nothing to do with it, and that they alone are concerned about the people and that we are going against the people. In fact, those reforms which are under way are calculated to ensure that there will be some degree of stabilization in our country by the end of the year, and that there should be confidence among all foreign investors to invest capital in Russia. I thank you.

[Moderator] Thank you for your work, gentlemen. Good bye, and allow me, on your behalf, to thank President Mitterrand and President Yeltsin. Thank you and good bye.

More on News Conference

LD1703090793 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 0854 GMT 17 Mar 93

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Vasiliy Golovnin]

[Text] Tokyo March 17 TASS—The Japanese Government has sharply rebuffed today President Francois Mitterrand's claim that Tokyo was adhering to a passive stand on aid to the democratic reforms in Russia. The head of the French state made this statement during the Tuesday press conference in Moscow, held after his talks with President Yeltsin.

Official representative of the Japanese Government, secretary-general of the Cabinet of Ministers Yohei Kono told a press conference here today that he "regretted" this statement and was "very much surprised" by

the fact that Paris was still "mistaken" about Tokyo's stand on aid to Russia. He said Japan was "seriously thinking on ways of rendering effective aid" to Moscow. However, it is common knowledge that Tokyo had itself declared more than once that it would not render large-scale aid to Russia as long as the South Kuriles territorial issue remained unsettled.

The current conflict between Japan and France is explained primarily by the fact that Tokyo is now actively opposing the French initiative to hold an emergency G-7 summit to work out new measures to support the Yelsin administration. President Mitterrand has moved to hold it at Vancouver early in April, immediately after the Russo-American summit talks there. According to the head of the French Government, not all the G-7 countries may take part in this conference, but only those that really want to aid democracy in Russia. He thereby implied that Japan with its special attitude to Moscow may find itself outside the meeting.

Rebuffing this French demarche, Kono stressed today that Mitterrand's call to hold an extraordinary summit to aid the Yeltsin administration was notbacked by most of the G-7 countries. He said he was "unable to understand" the French president's hint that Japan could be dropped from such a conference.

Cease-Fire Urged in Nagorno-Karabakh

LD1603163993 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1615 GMT 16 Mar 93

[Text] Moscow March 16 TASS—Boris Yeltsin and Francois Mitterrand have urged all parties involved in the conflict around Nagorno-Karabakh "to halt immediatedly combat operations and achieve an effective ceasefire in order to switch to solving disputable issues exclusively by peaceful means."

A joint statement adopted by the two presidents during Mitterrand's today's visit to Moscow confirms support for the efforts to settle the conflict within the framework of the Minsk CSCE conference.

Statement Supports Vance-Owen Plan

LD1603173593 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1625 GMT 16 Mar 93

[By ITAR-TASS: "Russian-French Statement on the Yugoslav Crisis"]

[Text] Moscow, 16 Mar—Russia and France have a common goal of ending the bloodshed in Bosnia and Hercegovina and ensuring that the war does not spread to other parts of what was Yugoslavia. Russia and France regard the Vance-Owen plan as a means to achieve the goals mentioned above and support its speediest possible implementation by the Bosnian factions with the assistance of the international community—including the establishment of UN peacekeeping forces in Bosnia and Hercegovina. Russia and France intend to make appropriate contingents available as part of these forces.

Expressing particular concern in connection with the situation that has emerged in Eastern Bosnia, Russia and France call upon the sides involved in the conflict to cease fire immediately. They expect the Serbian side's armed forces to ensure unhindered access for humanitarian convoys—including access to besieged regions—as soon as possible.

Russia and France call on all the Bosnian factions to adopt the Vance-Owen plan in its entirety and to begin implementing it without delay. They expect the FRY (Serbia and Montenegro) and also the Croatian Republic and all the other interested sides to facilitate in every way the speediest possible adoption and planned implementation of the package of accords mentioned above.

Steps aimed at facilitating, adopting, and implementing this plan will be welcomed by Russia and France. Russia and France are ready to make use of their influence to ensure that appropriate measures are effected by way of encouragement here. Russia and France support the extension and alteration of the UN forces' mandate in Croatia and the speediest possible implementation of other Security Council decisions on Croatia.

Russia and France regard a comprehensive settlement of Serbian- Croatian relations as a priority task and are ready to facilitate a successful dialogue between Serbia and Croatia. Russia and France support strengthening the stability in the southern region of the former Yugoslavia. This would be facilitated by a resolution of the problem that has arisen around the recognition of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and also by ensuring a special status for the area of Kosovo, which forms part of Serbia.

Russia and France support stepping up efforts to give assistance to the former Yugoslavia's population, which has become a victim of the war. They will continue to take part in measures aimed at delivering humanitarian aid to the affected population and the refugees. Russia and France welcome the efforts of other states that render such assistance.

Early G-7 Meeting Urged

OW1603172493 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1708 GMT 16 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] French President Francois Mitterrand spoke out on the need to hold a meeting of G-7 leaders even before the Tokyo summit, citing the results of his two hour long conversation with Russian President Boris Yeltsin in the Kremlin Tuesday [16 March].

In response to a question from INTERFAX correspondents, the French president said that the meeting should be held to discuss activating aid to Russian reforms. "I

have already discussed this with President Bill Clinton and Chancellor Helmut Kohl. I have the full authority of France to convince our partners of the need for such a meeting as early as April. They are called upon to establish conditions for the victory of democracy in Russia," said Mitterrand.

Before the 8th Congress, the West had not conceived of the possibility of such a serious comeback by anti-democratic forces in Russia, said Yeltsin at a press conference in the Kremlin.

"I am convinced," he said, "that such an analysis will speed up and increase aid from the world community to the new Russia. A meeting of G-7 leaders dedicated to this problem should be held in the very near future. In June or July, as was earlier planned, a meeting on aid to Russia will be too late," said the Russian president.

Mitterrand Departs

LD1603201993 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1930 GMT 16 Mar 93

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent]

[Excerpt] Moscow, 16 Mar—Upon the completion of his one-day official visit, French President Francois Mitterrand today left the Russian capital. [passage omitted]

Not Just 'Good Wishes' Wanted From Mitterrand

PM1603134993 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 16 Mar 93 First Edition pp 1, 4

[Yuriy Kovalenko report: "Prescriptions from F. Mitterrand's Attache Case"]

[Text] Paris—The Moscow meeting between Boris Yeltsin and Francois Mitterrand, scheduled for 16 March, comes at an extremely difficult time for both presidents.

The problems of the Russian head of state are well known in France, where it is considered that his positions have been weakened following the Congress. Regarding his French colleague, for him a period of painful coexistence—called "cohabitation" here—with a right-wing government begins in a few days' time, after the parliamentary elections of 21 and 28 March, in which the Socialist Party which he created is expected to be routed.

In preparing for this the 76-year-old Mitterrand is primarily emphasizing, in particular, his chief "forbidden zone"—foreign policy, to which he is seeking to minimize access for the future premier and foreign minister. Hence the French president's urgently organized rendezvous with Bill Clinton in Washington and Boris Yeltsin in Moscow, his recent initiatives on Yugoslavia and on convening an extraordinary meeting of the "G-7," etc.

By setting out for Moscow, F. Mitterrand is demonstrating France's support for the Russian president at the same time as resolving his own internal political tasks. Today Paris sees Yeltsin as the West's most important partner and ally who shares its democratic values and foreign policy goals, including disarmament. There is no real alternative to Boris Nikolayevich, it is believed on the banks of the Seine, with regard to implementing political and economic reforms in Russia, ensuring relative stability in the country, and preventing it from returning to the age of confrontation and "cold war."

In addition to moral and political support, France is giving Russia material and economic support—both independently and through the EC. Paris is perfectly well aware of the significance of such assistance, but Paris itself and other Western capitals object to its poor effectiveness as a result of both corruption and the Russian authorities' inability to manage the credits, loans, and nonrepayable grants that are being provided.

AFP points out that certain experts are sure that some of these funds have vanished because the Russian reforms are faltering hopelessly. Citing its own sources, AFP maintains that approximately one-third of all financial assistance does not reach Russia but is embezzled and at once transferred to private accounts which have been opened in Western banks.

Nevertheless, France is seeking to improve the effectiveness of international assistance for the Russian reforms. I will remind you that during their recent talks in Washington Mitterrand and Clinton advocated more resolute actions by the "G-7" in Russia's interests and proposed examining these questions at their extraordinary summit meeting.

...At the Moscow talks, to all appearances, Yeltsin and Mitterrand will note with satisfaction the closeness of their positions on a broad range of international problems, including disarmament, the moratorium on nuclear tests, and the war in the former Yugoslavia. The presidents will sum up the results of bilateral cooperation, including under the many agreements which the Russian president signed in Paris in February last year. Unfortunately, diplomats recognize that this whole broad legal treaty basis designed, as people say in such instances, to "give a boost" to bilateral relations remains ineffective. The agreements themselves "are not working," and cooperation, when you come right down to it, is marking time.

Things are still worse, by all accounts, in the trade and economic sphere. Parisian entrepreneurs have emphasized in conversation with me that, because of the worsening chaos in Russia, ties are being cut back and are taking on the nature of relations with "Third World" states, which are their "raw materials appendage."

"Russia is a developing country," Francois Michael, president of Borland-Europe, a company which produces computer programs, bluntly declared at a conference devoted to problems of cooperation with the former land of the Soviets which your correspondent attended.

Cooperation is being slowed up both by the Russian mess itself and by the increased caution of the French

and their reluctance to take risks. "I am amazed that my compatriots are absent from Russia," Francois Michael said.

French companies have nonetheless concluded some big contracts in our country recently. Among them I will point to the largely unprecedented agreement with the ELF Aquitaine oil concern to prospect for and extract oil in Saratov and Volgograd Oblasts.

Treaties were signed recently between the French Nuclear Power Commissariat and the corresponding Russian ministry on the use of nuclear power for peaceful purposes and on safety at nuclear electric power stations, as well as a long-term agreement on cooperation between Russia and the French Aerospatiale Company. The latter, in particular, provides for the participation of Russians in the creation of a second-generation supersonic aircraft and a liquid-fuel engine for the future Ariane rocket and for the participation of the French in developing a new model of the Mi-38 helicopter and a 100-seater Tu-334 aircraft.

...The French, who are inclined to rhetoric, like to mention the "privileged relationship" between Paris and Moscow, the "fraternity in arms," and the significance of Russian-French concord for the fate of peace and of Europe. All this is so. But at a critical hour for Russia I would like Francois Mitterrand, a very experienced and shrewd politician who feels genuine sympathy with Russia, not to confine himself to good wishes and promises in Moscow.

Of course, the fate of the fatherland is always in the hands of its citizens. But the assistance of the international community can be a key factor in saving Russia. Two political leaders could play a key role in mobilizing the international community: Bill Clinton in the United States and Francois Mitterrand on the old continent. Was it not this that was discussed at their recent meeting in Washington?

Spokesman on U.S. Summit, DPRK Pullout From Nuclear Treaty

OW1603174093 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1710 GMT 16 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] The agenda of the Russo-American summit in Vancouver, Canada, will most probably include organization of a G-7 summit on aid to Russia, Sergey Yastrzhembskiy, Russian Foreign Ministry spokesman, said Tuesday [16 March]. He thinks that President Bill Clinton will perhaps want to hear Boris Yeltsin on the political situation in Russia and will suggest his own plan of backing Russian reform.

Deputy Director of the Ministry's North American Department Vladimir Chkhikvishvili who was present at the briefing said that the diplomats of the two countries "are busily working and a few documents will probably be tabled for the presidents to sign."

According to Yastrzhembskiy, the exact date of air-dropping 30 tons of Russian humanitarian aid in Bosnia has not been finalized. Russian representatives are to leave for Frankfurt/Main, Germany, shortly to coordinate the operation.

Yastrzhembskiy said that the aid will be delivered "first of all to whoever needs it most, be it Bosnian Serbs or Moslems."

On the withdrawal of the Korean People's Democratic Republic from the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, he said that this Pyongyang action will lead to "numerous negative consequences which are, at the moment, difficult to predict." He believes that, most of all, it will make the consultations and negotiations between the two Korean states more difficult.

Yastrzhembskiy thinks that "Pyongyang still has time to appreciate the fairly unanimous reaction of the world community and reconsider its hasty decision."

'Great Hopes' Pinned on Summit

LD1603205493 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1500 GMT 16 Mar 93

[By ITAR-TASS diplomatic correspondent Sergey Postanogov]

[Text] Moscow, 16 Mar—The Russian side is pinning great hopes on the forthcoming Vancouver meeting between Russian President Boris Yeltsin and U.S. President Bill Clinton in April 1993. This was stated at a briefing today by Sergey Yastrzhembskiy, director of the press and information department of the Russian Federation Foreign Ministry.

It is a feature of the forthcoming summit, he noted, that the U.S. President will evidently wish to be briefed on the situation that is taking shape in Russia in view of the results of Russia's recent extraordinary Congress of People's Deputies.

Sergey Yastrzhembskiy thinks that bilateral relations, especially in the context of the provision of aid and assistance to Russian reforms by the U.S. Administration, will be discussed at the Vancouver meeting. A whole series of international problems of mutual interest will also be broached.

Zorkin Urges Multiparty 'National Accord' Conference

PM1703113593 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 17 Mar 93 p 2

[Aleksandr Shalnev report: "B. Clinton Will Probably Receive V. Zorkin"]

[Text] Washington—Valeriy Zorkin, chairman of the Russian Constitutional Court, who has begun a week-long visit to America, will be interested not least in the problem of the separation of powers in the United States.

In a conversation with me, V. Zorkin, who is here at the personal invitation of W. Rehnquist, chairman of the U.S. Supreme Court, did not attach excessive significance to the fact that he has gone to spend seven days in the United States amid a deterioration in the political situation in Russia itself. "I do not believe that the situation in our country is hopeless...," he stressed. "I do not think that when I return to Russia I will find myself in a different country from the one I left a week before."

As I understood from what he said, just before his departure V. Zorkin was in contact with Russian President Boris Yeltsin. However, the chairman of the court refused to report on what options were discussed for possible further action. At the same time the court chairman, who in December was the mediator in achieving a compromise between the legislative and executive branches of power, was fairly clear that the court does not intend to "get dragged in and watered down [rastvoryatsya]," as he put it, in these mediatory processes, thus "subjecting to inflation" its own role in Russian society.

V. Zorkin made it clear that he is skeptical about the idea of a referendum or plebiscite. "No one is forbidden to hold a plebiscite," he said, "even IZVESTIYA." From the viewpoint of the court chairman, who, as I understood it, had in mind both the speaker and the president, "an unviable impulse is now coming from the center-...radicalism must be avoided," he stressed.

V. Zorkin's own idea is to secure "the power of national accord," and he envisions the beginning of the process of building this accord as a kind of conference bringing together representatives of "Civic Union," communists, left-wing radicals, and other associations, "which would assemble not with ready-made decisions, but in a desire to find a solution together." Industrialists, trade unions, regional representatives, and so on would join in. According to the court chairman, experience of implementing such processes has already been developed in world history.

...In addition to having conversations in the Supreme Court, V. Zorkin will meet with congressmen, senators, U.S. legal circles, and also the high-ranking administration staffers who liaise with Russia. It is not out of the question that the court chairman will be received by President William Clinton.

Clinton Receives Zorkin

LD1703102593 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 0944 GMT 17 Mar 93

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Vladimir Matyash]

[Text] Washington March 17 TASS—U.S. President Bill Clinton received Valeriy Zorkin, chairman of the Russian Federation Constitutional Court, in the White House on Tuesday [16 March]. Zorkin is visiting the U.S. at the invitation of the chairman of the U.S. Supreme Court and is familiarising himself with the federal judicial system of the country.

President Clinton and Zorkin mostly discussed the progress of the reform and the political situation in Russia. Clinton stressed that the U.S. was interested in the continuation of the reform policy and expressed hope that a political compromise enjoying broad public support would soon be reached in Russia. In his opinion, this would make it possible to create a more stable basis for the consistent continuation of the economic reform.

Clinton stressed that with all the difficulties connected with the internal political and economic development of Russia, which the U.S. Administration and all Americans fully realise, the most important thing is that the Russian leadership should be firmly oriented towards the reforming of society, primarily in the socio- economic sphere.

Clinton met with understanding the idea that major socio-economic transformations, like the current reform of President Yeltsin, call for broader support and practical assistance. In this context the U.S. President reiterated the readiness of the U.S. Administration to further pursue a policy of assistance to the democratic transformations in Russia, meaning that the U.S. intends to become the leader of the group of industrially developed western countries, which are interested in the success of the Russian reform.

According to President Clinton, the forthcoming Russian-American summit will be of crucial importance for working out a strategy of cooperation of the two countries.

Foreign Ministry Official Hails U.S. Humanitarian Aid

LD1603140693 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1346 GMT 16 Mar 93

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Sergey Postanogov]

[Text] Moscow March 16 TASS—A Washington-signed agreement on grain deliveries to Russia as part of humanitarian aid is a positive example of cooperation of which both sides will profit, head of the Russian Foreign Ministry's Press and Information Directorate Sergey Yastrzhembskiy told a briefing here today.

Under the agreement, approximately 520,000 tonnes of grain and 87,000 tonnes of rice to a total sum of 102 million dollars will be delivered to Russia as humanitarian aid in April, 1993, said the official.

The purchase and delivery to the Russian border will be done at the expense of the U.S. Government. "The

choice of time and form of the assistance reflects the new U.S. Administration's desire to render aid to Russia in various forms," he noted.

Sergey Yastrzhembskiy told correspondents on request of the Russian side additional U.S. humanitarian aid to an approximate sum of 100 million dollars is now being discussed to deliver about 600,000 tonnes of grain in April-May.

He especially stressed the aid is rendered without any political or other conditions. The assistance is given to the Russian Government to use domestic market sales revenues for support of families with low income.

Thus, two aims are achieved: Russian consumers receive grain, and the government - additional money for social needs.

Change in U.S. Perceptions of Russia Seen

PM1603123593 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 13 Mar 93 p 3

[Special correspondent Vladislav Drobkov report: "Before Vancouver"]

[Text] Washington—Another meeting, a "working" meeting this time, between the heads of two states which were rivals at one time—Russia and the United States—will be held 3-4 April in the Canadian city of Vancouver. The last visit to Moscow by an American president—G. Bush at the time—took place in January of this year. But, as observers here have been quick to explain, B. Clinton and B. Yeltsin have decided to meet "briefly" in a third country, in order to leave a full-scale state visit till a later date.

Such a meeting has been talked about for a long time. Immediately after Clinton's victory at the November elections, which came as rather a surprise to official Moscow, invitations started to arrive with persistent regularity from Moscow for a discussion of the prospects of the development of bilateral relations and global problems at a personal meeting between the two presidents. In response, Washington invariably expressed hopes of a meeting "in the near future," but at the same time firmly made it clear that internal American matters were nevertheless the new administration's first concern.

In other words, Clinton was clearly not in a hurry to meet with Yeltsin. Replying politely but evasively to the latter's numerous appeals to hold a Russian-American summit meeting as soon as possible, Clinton, who had already met with the leaders of many states, would not name a date for the meeting until the end of February. And it seems that the reason for this was not the sluggishness of the new American president, which has already been noticed here, but the untimely haste of the Russian president.

Without Trump Cards, But With Kozyrev

In hastening to sign the Treaty on Strategic Offensive Weapons [START II] in Moscow at the beginning of January with G. Bush, literally during the last weeks of the latter's presidency, B. Yeltsin essentially emasculated a meeting with the new chief of the White House. By giving Bush a good-bye present of an agreement on the destruction of thousands of nuclear strategic missiles, which was put together in haste and was clearly more advantageous to the United States than to Russia, Yeltsin played the last Russian trump card in the game with the United States. "And why was he in such a hurry to sign the treaty with Bush? Clinton would have been happy to start his term with the effective conclusion of an important agreement with Russia," I was told by an advisor to the new president, who wishes to remain anonymous.

Washington now has nothing more of a "major" nature to achieve from Moscow aside from strict compliance with the terms of this treaty and conformity to the American line in a number of regional conflicts. And maybe also the payment of the multiplying Russian debts and unpaid interest on loans issued to Moscow to buy American grain. As of the beginning of March, the "grain debts" alone exceeded $350 million. This is more than two-thirds of the total dollar value of American aid promised to Russia for 1993 on the basis of the much publicized "Freedom Support Bill."

As for Moscow—many people here believe—it now needs a great deal from Washington. This includes financial assistance to fuel reforms which have become hopelessly bogged down. And also a deferment of payment on old debts which have become an excessive burden on the Russian economy. And assistance in introducing market mechanisms of economic management. And restoration of at least a semblance of the former equality in relations between the two countries, which increasingly recall the cooperation between horse and rider.

AP's testimony in this connection is curious. According to its observer, Russian diplomats are now privately begging their American colleagues to avoid the "crude 'big brother' style with respect to Russia which was characteristic of the Bush administration." "We must show our people that our relations with America are based on partnership, and that real consultations are taking place"—this is what they are persuading them, according to an anonymous State Department staffer cited by the agency.

The Americans believe, however, that the expression "poor but proud" does not now apply to the Russians and their current leaders. And indeed can it be otherwise, if the new Russian leadership is not even capable of reducing the once powerful nuclear missile arsenal inherited from the USSR without assistance from the United States. People here cannot help smiling scornfully when they observe the slanging match between Moscow and

Kiev over who should get the larger portion of the $800 million Congress has allocated to pay for work to dismantle Soviet nuclear missiles. And while the dispute goes on, the Americans do not intend to pay either one side or the other.

One incident recently described by the Moscow correspondent of THE CHRISTIAN SCIENCE MONITOR is a good illustration of the "equality" in relations between Washington and Moscow. This excerpt merits quotation in full:

"At the beginning of February the Russian Foreign Ministry published a statement condemning the Israeli deportation of 415 Palestinians as an 'excessive' act creating a 'serious threat' to the Near East peace talks at which Russia and the United States are cochairmen. Within three days, 5 February, a ministry spokesman published an 'amplification' which contained an attempt to support the Israeli proposal on a partial return of the deportees. An unpublicized event occurred between these two contradictory public statements—a visit by a U.S. Embassy staffer to the Foreign Ministry building on Smolensk Square. According to an informed American source, the interpretation of the U.S.-backed Israeli stance given by this staffer was enough to make the Russians backtrack and find themselves alongside their American partners."

In a word, was this not a pleasant little scene out of "the taming of the shrew"? It is no coincidence that people here sometimes joke that under A. Kozyrev the Russian Foreign Ministry has become so amenable to Washington's position on the most varied international problems that it would be opportune to introduce under the minister a special post of adviser-envoy from the U.S. State Department.

So, in the given situation, what prompted the U.S. Administration to agree to the 3-4 April meeting? It seems that Washington became downright worried about the future of the Russian president himself, whose position has been seriously undermined recently, as THE NEW YORK TIMES put it, by "the growing dissatisfaction of the population at the spread of inflation, crime, and corruption." The probability of the president's fall has become more manifest here than ever before.

Armitage's Warning

Ambassador Armitage, a most experienced American diplomat who has undergone an excellent professional schooling, doubtless knew what he was saying a few weeks ago when he publicly warned of the imminent decline of the "Yeltsin era." Speaking at Tennessee State University, he stated that the current Russian president has already "exhausted his usefulness" and may soon be replaced by other characters on the Russian political scene.

This statement—and the press here has made no secret of this—evoked the sharp dissatisfaction of Special Envoy S. Talbott, recently appointed to the U.S. State Department to coordinate all U.S. policy relating to the countries that have emerged on the ruins of the Soviet Union. It is believed here that Talbott, who has a serious influence on Clinton, his friend from student days, was the person who convinced the U.S. President that he should quickly "pay attention to Yeltsin" and alleviate the impact of Armitage's statement. And the respected diplomat himself was immediately removed from the post of coordinator of the various types of aid being given to the former Soviet republics.

As far as I can judge from Washington, after this Moscow tried to create the impression that the incident involving Armitage's statement is over and that all but the next "historical phase" in Russian-U.S. relations is upon us in connection with the upcoming meeting of the presidents.

But that is in Moscow. Washington, however, is by no means prepared to forget Armitage's warning so easily. There is a lot of evidence that, despite the public disavowal of the utterances of a demoted diplomat, the process of a serious rethink in policy toward Russia and other former Soviet republics is now under way within the U.S. leadership. Furthermore, Armitage's call for America to stop gearing itself to individual personalities, regardless of how their current policy may suit Washington, is finding more and more supporters here. Having burned their fingers on Gorbachev, whom the United States considered to be irreplaceable and unshakable literally until his last few days in the Kremlin, people here do not want the same thing to happen with Yeltsin.

Without the Rose-Colored Spectacles of the Past

More indicative, I would say, is the view held by many observers here of what is happening in Russia. Although there still exists here a simplified perception of Russian events as the "struggle of the democrats against the 'reactionary communists'."

But side by side with this, speeches and commentaries which paint a depressing picture of the unprofessionalism, corruption, and disarray of the new Russian authorities are becoming increasingly frequent. The press here is writing with increasing objectivity of their inability not just to reform a great country but also to efficiently dispose even of the not too considerable aid which the United States and other Western countries are now granting to Russia.

Of interest in this connection is a series of articles recently published by THE WASHINGTON POST on the sorry state of the Russian economy and finances, which are being destroyed by rapacious acts committed both by an emergent bourgeois class and by corrupt Russian officialdom. With rare frankness the newspaper recounts the serious disillusionment of a significant proportion of the population, both with the actions of Yeltsin's government and the aim it has set itself—to build capitalism in Russia. Incidentally, as a Gallup poll carried out in our country bears witness, 44 percent of

the inhabitants of Russia consider the market policy being implemented by the president to be a mistake.

A few days ago, USA TODAY printed a report from Moscow under the telltale headline: "As the Power Base Collapses, Yeltsin Fights For His Life." Citing specific facts about rampant inflation, the fall in production, and the growth in crime in Russia, the newspaper notes the Russians' profound dissatisfaction. "The majority of Western diplomats and Russian experts, who called Yeltsin a transitional figure, are predicting his downfall," USA TODAY testifies.

But it is by no means only newspaper articles that are allowing the real picture of what is happening in Russia today to filter through. A few days ago, hearings in two influential committees of U.S. Congress—the Senate Armed Services Committee and the House Foreign Affairs Committee—were devoted to the problem of Russian-U.S. relations and granting assistance to Moscow. Furthermore, the apparently already dismissed R. Armitage was invited to the first session. At the Senate hearings he did not repudiate his earlier assessment of Yeltsin's prospects which had caused such a storm, and he stated that he reserves the right to a personal opinion, thus bearing out his reputation as a man who tells it as it is.

Sachs, the not unknown inspirer of the reformers on Gaydar's team, Lawson, president of the U.S.-Russian Business Council, and Cohen, director of the Russian Research Program at Princeton University, addressed congressmen at the House of Representatives. All three Russian affairs specialists (each, it is true, with his own reputation), acknowledged the lamentable state of the Russian economy and the threat hanging over the incumbent authorities.

So one gets the impression that the previous optimism concerning the reforms being carried out by Yeltsin has evaporated not just in Russia itself but also in the United States. And the rose-colored spectacles through which many people were until recently looking at events in Russia have long since been removed. And in normal light a Russia which is poverty-stricken, conflict-torn, corruption-riddled, and falling apart as a result of inept leadership, and which still possesses tens of thousands of nuclear warheads, looks extremely unattractive and at the same time frightening

So unattractive and so frightening that many people are beginning to ask themselves: Is Yeltsin really what W. Christopher recently described him as—"the best possibility the Russian people have right now"? Has not the secretary of state, unlike his recent subordinate, the candid Armitage, displayed excessive diplomacy?

Western Response to Yeltsin Plight Viewed

PM1703094993 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 16 Mar 93 pp 1, 3

[Article by Yuriy Glukhov: "...And We Started To Roll. Will We Reach to the Bottom?"]

[Text] We are living in paradoxical times. Only recently, the more our leaders were eulogized in their own country, the less they were rated abroad. Now the opposite is the case. For instance, the lower the Russians' credit of trust in the Russian president's policy, the higher it is abroad.

To judge by reports in our obedient official mass media, B. Yeltsin's popularity in the West has gone right off the scale. And that in a period when the country is experiencing a very severe crisis and the people have been brought to destitution and the economy to collapse.

The rule (I quote U.S. President B. Clinton) of "the main exponent of democracy, progress and market reform" in Russia, B. Yeltsin, has been just as brilliant. Despite a rule whereby he possessed extraordinary powers, operating with the aid of edicts.

The state of emergency powers failed to bring the desired fruit, did not justify itself, and was repealed by the eighth Congress of People's Deputies. It would seem that everything which is taking place is a purely domestic matter for the Russians. It would be strange, for instance, to demand that the Americans reelect G. Bush as president on the grounds that he suits Moscow better than the unknown B. Clinton. I can imagine how the touchy yankees would have been offended and how they would have bridled. Nor would it have done Bush much good. It is surprising that all this is permitted with regard to Russia.

A quite unique campaign has been developing in the West since the congress. Again Russia is being blackmailed by being told that it can only be issued with named cheques for aid. This time "made out to Yeltsin." That is asserted by B. Clinton, F. Mitterrand, H. Kohl, and others.

We have already heard something similar. We have already been promised manna from heaven—first "made out to Gorbachev" and then "made out to Gaydar." And the result is well known—it is nonexistent.

In fact it is a case not of a campaign of solidarity with our country, which does indeed need international aid and support, but of the West's far-reaching actions and demarches on the pretext of "protecting" the Russian president.

After the collapse of the Union, after the fueling of national-sovereign separatism, after the "witch-hunt" and the "red-browns," an attempt is being made to split society on the basis of the artificial principle of "reformers and antireformers." The "progressive" president and the "conservative, communist" congress are clashing head-on. It is being artificially concealed that the thrust of the crisis lies in the ill-considered nature of the reforms themselves and in the errors which have been made. It is forgotten that it was the Communists who acted as the initiators of perestroyka in the Soviet Union. Finally, the democratic president is being directly

pushed toward antidemocratic actions. The West is hinting directly that it will turn a blind eye to the introduction of a state of emergency in Russia and the flouting of elementary rights and freedoms.

The selfish interests of our newfound friends is obvious. They would like to continue to deal with Yeltsin's obliging and uncontrolled team. This team plays the serious game in the international arena as though it were playing at give-away. Without having elaborated a foreign policy or military doctrine in advance, it is surrendering one position after another, losing allies, territories, weapons, and the prestige of a great country. Naturally, any controlling institutions like parliament or the congress are viewed as an obstacle. Hence the West's unceremonious attempts to remove them and to gamble on one horse.

Does Russia need aid hedged around with such conditions? Of course not.

In addition its real importance is not that great. An increasing number of Americans disputes the importance of B. Clinton's expressed desire to support B. Yeltsin. Here many people are aware of how limited the potential of Western aid actually is, write U.S. observers R. Evans and R. Novak. As one government service veteran who has made a serious study of Russia frankly stated, "everything the United States can do for B. Yeltsin will have a scarcely discernible effect."

The bone which the IMF is constantly intending to throw but never does to the CIS countries is $24 billion. Last year Russia lost $18 billion by joining the UN sanctions and renouncing the traditional sales of arms, in addition to $17 billion lost as a result of the leak of capital abroad.

...Need we mention the psychological aspect of the haggling the West has launched around support for Russia and its president. Since the days of the Golden Horde the Moscow princes have not sunk to the level of vassals depending on the outside world. Surely we have not reached the bottom now?

Churkin on Bosnian Settlement, Aid Convoys

PM1603145793 Moscow ROSSIYSKIYE VESTI in Russian 16 Mar 93 p 7

[Pavel Shinkarenko article: "Balkan Caldron. Together with World Community, Russia Seeks Ways To Settle Conflict in Bosnia-Hercegovina"]

[Excerpts] A recess has been called at the talks on a peace settlement in Bosnia-Hercegovina which opened in New York at the beginning of March. All the participants—in addition to the delegations from the three warring sides and the intermediaries (Cyrus Vance from the United Nations and Lord David Owen from the EC), there are also the special representatives of the Russian and U.S. presidents—have gone home to consult with their leaders. After listening to the report of his emissary—Vitaliy Churkin, Russian Federation deputy foreign minister—Boris Yeltsin declared: The New York round confirmed the lack of a real alternative to the Vance-Owen plan as the basis of a settlement in Bosnia-Hercegovina. The sides in the conflict are faced with a choice: to approve the main elements of this plan or to assume responsibility for further bloodshed. [passage omitted]

Russia's position has been clearly set out in a Foreign Ministry statement. Its essence is that the world community cannot go on tolerating the delay over a settlement and is called upon to impose the logic of peace on the sides involved in the conflict without delay.

"The Vance-Owen plan," Sergey Lavrov, Russian Federation deputy foreign minister, explained, "reflects the balance of interests and the responsibility of all three Bosnian sides, as well as the balance of interests and responsibility of other states—neighboring states above all. We insist that the Security Council assume responsibility for the conflict's political settlement."

"Agreement Is Attainable..."

The New York round, held under UN auspices, has shown that an agreement on settling the conflict in Bosnia-Hercegovina is possible. "There must be nine signatures below the whole package of the talks," Lord Owen said. "Today there are seven signatures. It is clear that we are approaching the adoption of a decision."

And yet the remaining portion is most difficult. For two of the three warring sides—the Muslims and the Serbs—disagree with the proposed version. There are still differences among the sides over the map of Bosnia, as well as over the composition of the provisional government which is to take over after the cease-fire agreement comes into force.

"Recently," Vitaliy Churkin explained the Russian Foreign Ministry's position to me, "we saw it as our task to urgently stifle extremist actions, wherever they arise and on anybody's initiative. We transferred that balanced and objective spirit to the New York talks. We had frank dialogues both with Radovan Karadzic, leader of the Bosnian Serbs, and with Bosnian President Alija Izetbegovic. But we had particularly frequent contacts with the intermediaries—Vance and Owen—and with U.S. colleagues."

"Our task," Lord Owen explained, "is to offer the world an all-embracing plan for a peace settlement and make all three sides sign it. But if one of the sides refuses to sign and the world considers that it has done so with insufficient grounds, then in that case the world will have the right to draw its own conclusions."

Humanitarian Convoy

The situation with regard to delivering humanitarian freight to almost inaccessible besieged localities in

Bosnia was another aspect of the New York talks. The Russian delegation also participated in the discussion of the problem.

"A Russian humanitarian convoy consisting of 10 heavy trucks has already made seven sorties from Belgrade to Sarajevo. Hundreds of tonnes of food, medical supplies, and clothes have been delivered. The question of increasing the pool by five trucks and organizing a second convoy—from Zagreb to Bosnia—is now being examined. In addition, Russia has joined in the delivery of freight by air—two military transport aircraft have been set aside for this purpose."

The deputy minister pointed out with regret that this action encounters opposition from extremist forces in Bosnia. In particular, a convoy of Russian trucks which had already completed the trip to Sarajevo recently came under sniper fire. A French woman citizen died, and several people escorting the freight were injured.

"But that shooting, which plays a provocative role, did not achieve its aim: Humanitarian aid will be continued," Vitaliy Churkin concluded.

Voices Support for Vance-Owen Plan

TA1603174293 Nicosia Bayrak Radio in Turkish 1130 GMT 16 Mar 93

[Text] Vitaliy Churkin, Russian deputy minister of foreign affairs, has said that if the Vance-Owen plan is accepted the world public opinion will not leave the Bosnian Muslims to face the Serbs alone.

In a statement to ANATOLIA Agency, Churkin recalled that the United States and Europe have undertaken the obligation to do all they can to make sure that the Vance-Owen plan is implemented in the event the plan is accepted by the parties concerned. He stated that according to the agreement the Serbs will hand over to the Bosnian Muslims the administration of the regions they have occupied. Churkin added that the Serbs previously living in these regions will continue to do so.

Ministry Says Aid To Be Airdropped to Bosnians

LD1603202693 Moscow Radio Moscow World Service in English 1900 GMT 16 Mar 93

[Text] Russian planes will drop food to the starving in Bosnia irrespective of their ethnic or religious background. The announcement was made in Moscow by a Foreign Ministry spokesman. Planes will take off from an airfield in Germany. The spokesman didn't name the date of the beginning of the flights but said that the 30 tonnes of humanitarian aid will be airdropped to the needy Serbs, Croats, and Muslims.

'Source' Says Gas Pricing Accord Reached With Ukraine

OW1603181193 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1709 GMT 16 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Russia and Ukraine on Tuesday [16 March] reached an agreement on the price Ukraine is to pay for Russian natural gas and on tariffs for the transportation of Russian gas through Ukrainian territory.

A reliable source told INTERFAX that Russian Deputy Prime Minister Aleksandr Shokhin and the Chairman of the Ukrainian State Oil and Gas Committee, Mikhail Kovalko, during their talks in Moscow, agreed on a price of 27,600 rubles per 1,000 cubic meters of gas. Transportation of every 1,000 cubic meters of gas along pipelines will cost Russia 180 rubles per 100 km.

The information has not yet been officially confirmed.

Shokhin and Kovalko also discussed a project to build a gas pipeline from Iran to Ukraine which would run through Russian territory. However, they made no concrete decisions on it.

Oil Talks End 'Without Result'

LD1603221293 Moscow Ostankino Television First Channel Network in Russian 2100 GMT 16 Mar 93

[From the "Novosti" newscast]

[Text] The latest round of Russian-Ukrainian talks on fuel prices has ended without result. Kiev considers the price proposed by Moscow—24,000 rubles [R] per tonne of oil—to be totally unrealistic, just like the proposed price for the transport of Russian fuel to the west across the territory of Ukraine.

Details of KAL Jet Downing To Be Released

OW1603175193 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1710 GMT 16 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Sergey Stepanov, executive secretary of the Russian state commission investigating the downing by a Soviet fighter aircraft of a Korean airliner in 1983, told reporters the commission would publish its official findings around the end of April or the beginning of May. The KAL-007 Boeing was shot down on September 1, 1983, all 296 passengers and crew were killed.

Stepanov said the investigation was in its final stages, and that Boeing laboratories in Seattle were going to make a model of the jetliner.

Although Russia, he said, was the legal successor to the Soviet Union, it did not hold itself responsible for the incident, but it did consider paying compensation to the victims' families.

The executive secretary also said a monument to the victims would be built near Nevelsk, Sakhalin, and a mourning worship service would be held there.

It was impossible to grant the repeated requests for the victims' remains on the part of their families since the bodies had nearly completely been destroyed in the crash, Stepanov said.

Meeting With Azerbaijani Delegation Canceled

OW1603203193 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1943 GMT 16 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] The meeting between government delegations from Azerbaijan and Russia which was planned for Tuesday [16 March] has been cancelled. The press center of the Azerbaijani Cabinet of Ministers told an INTERFAX correspondent that the Azerbaijani delegation, headed by the republic's acting prime minister, Ali Masimov, did not leave for Moscow.

The press center did not give a reason for the visit's postponement, nor did it give a new date for the meeting.

Official on Resuming Economic Ties With Azerbaijan

OW1703031793 Baku Azerbaycan Radio Televiziyasi Television Network in Russian 1500 GMT 12 Mar 93

[Report on interview with Vladimir Mikhaylovich Mashchits, chairman of Russian State Commission for Cooperation With the Commonwealth Members, by Amila Asumova; place and date not given; from the "Telefaks" newscast]

[Text] To build and not to destroy should be the basic principle in mutual relations between independent states. Amila Asumova reports. [Video shows Asumova speaking with Mashchits in his office.]

[Begin recording] [Asumova] In a situation when former republics receive independence and sovereignty to become self- dependent states, it is logical that issues arise concerning the creation of new economic areas. Someone once said very accurately: Independence is just another form of dependence. In the footsteps of (?independence) and sovereignty comes the realization of the necessity to build full-fledged, interrepublican—and to define for the sake of clarity—interstate ties. The goal is not to struggle or wage war with each other, but to build. Naturally as before the priority belongs to Russia, for today Russia ensures 65 percent of the resource needs for Azerbaijan. For all that, Russia is also our fundamental market. It is this specifically that we discuss with Vladimir Mikhaylovich Mashchits, chairman of the State Committee for Russian Economic Cooperation. [Video shows name plate showing Mashchits' title and name on the office door.]

[Mashchits] Of course the disintegration of such a large state negatively reflects on the mutual economic ties between the states which came into existence. In a way, the reasons are not even political, but simply spill over from the fact that a singular state has disintegrated. We had a period of approximately half a year when everyone had very careless attitudes towards the relationships between each other. Everyone tried to shield themselves with barriers by organizing various customs posts and limiting exports of various kinds of food and goods. However, later on reforms began in Russia because everyone understood they could not go on this way. Gradually during the first half of the year they came to realize the ruin caused by these economic breaks, and so on and so forth. So, my experience with the talks shows that the desire to reach some kind of agreement has been dominant since about the beginning of last year. [end recording]

NOVYE VREMYA Interviews RSA President

MB1703055793 Moscow Radio Moscow in Afrikaans 1700 GMT 16 Mar 93

[Report on interview with South African State President F. W. de Klerk by NOVYE VREMYA journalist Nicolay Rishidnyak; place and not given; read by announcer]

[Text] One of the latest issues of the Russian periodical NOVYE VREMYA contains an article by its special correspondent in South Africa. In it, Russian journalist Nicolay Rishidnyak tells, among other things, about his meeting with South African State President Mr. F.W. de Klerk. We felt that our listeners would be interested to hear excerpts from the article.

When the first Russian stepped through the entrance to the Union Building more than 3 years ago, after decades of isolation, local residents told him proudly: This is the Boer Kremlin. The discussion I had with the president, writes Nicolay Rishidnyak, indicated that he wanted to proceed seriously with the dismantling of the apartheid system. Mr. de Klerk spoke about phases, timetables, and details about the lifting of the draconian laws of race discrimination.

To a journalist who had flown in from Lusaka, the headquarters of the Frontline States which, for all practical purposes, were at war with South Africa, the phases and dates did not exactly seem attainable. The mere fact of the meeting, not to mention the South African leader's statements about his plans, drew a negative reaction in Moscow, to put it mildly. There were many witch-hunters and experts on apartheid who owed both their university degrees and social positions to apartheid, and who wanted to stone this inexperienced journalist for having so irresponsibly made contact with the leader of the racist regime.

Well, that's all in the past. Mr. de Klerk needed just 3 years for his dreams to overturn the country. The apartheid laws have been removed, the country's isolation is literally over, and an election and new government are

around the corner. One can recall how the president's first words in Parliament on the need to put an end to the apartheid system and white privilege caused tempers to flare. It almost led to fisticuffs. During the previous session some members of Parliament had even left the hall frothing at the mouth and calling the president a traitor.

Now, it seems, common sense has triumphed. At the recently ended session of Parliament all the members of Parliament were aware of an indisputable fact: to block that which has already been done would be stupid. That is why the record time proposed by the state president for the transition from a racist to a democratic society met with almost no opposition. As is known, he proposed that negotiations and the multiparty talks on the future political dispensation be resumed in the near future.

Mr. de Klerk's proposal to form an interim executive council made up of both white and black leaders by June apparently sounded sensational and, to complete the complex consolidation process, he proposed that the first general democratic elections in South Africa and the formation of a government of national unity take place at the beginning of next year. It seems nothing can stop him. He is tireless. His face has grown old and lean, and there are bags under his eyes.

That is how he looked at his earlier meeting with Russian journalists, writes Nicolay Rishidnyak. Yet the same sharp, penetrating look is still in his eyes, as well as the readiness to improvise. South Africa will be a country with a multiparty democracy which will be able to consider itself a full member of the community of civilized nations, says the president with determination. As for personal ambition, it is not important who will play which role in the new government. The main thing is that all parties and groups, and therefore also their leaders, will have the opportunity to take part in the election. Those are the words with which President F.W. de Klerk of South Africa ended his discussion with Russian journalists.

Fedorov Participation in G-7 Meeting Viewed

PM1703092993 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 17 Mar 93 First Edition p 2

[Mikhail Berger article: "G-7 Taking Close Interest in Situation in Russia Again"]

[Text] The meeting of representatives of the heads of the most highly developed industrial countries, known as the "big seven," has ended in Hong Kong. Russia was also invited to the meeting and was represented by Vice Premier Boris Fedorov.

As yet this meeting has not produced any formalized results as far as Russia is concerned; nor was there any theoretical possibility of this. The officials meeting in Hong Kong were so-called sherpas—that is, this was still spadework, albeit at a pretty high level. Sherpas do not make decisions or, moreover, officially express their viewpoints. But a great deal depends on them since they are the ones who prepare matters for their governments and their conclusions have a decisive influence on the actual G7 leaders' position.

Two main questions in the context of the "Russian problem" were at the center of the Hong Kong meeting: What is happening to the reforms in Russia and how Russia is going to service the foreign debt. Addressing the G7 representatives, Fedorov expressed the government's categorical intention to continue the reforms, whose main thrust remains privatization and financial stabilization. Here he noted that privatization is jeopardized by the fourth option (handing enterprises over to labor collectives), which parliament might adopt under pressure from the populists.

It is difficult to say whether Fedorov succeeded in convincing the sherpas that the reforms in Russia are indeed continuing and have a chance of succeeding. On each subsequent occasion it is increasingly difficult to persuade the West of this. Nevertheless he asked for the Russian reforms to be given support, which, although forthcoming from international financial organizations hitherto, has not been very visible to people.

Fedorov also linked the problem of servicing the foreign debt to the development of the reforms in Russia. If the payments burden proves excessive and creditors fail to agree to significant debt rescheduling making it possible to defer a substantial part of the payments due in the next few years, Russia will hardly be able to carry out financial stabilization. This in turn would undermine the reforms in the economy as a whole which would complicate the debt problem even further.

There are still differences of view over what annual payments Russia should and can make toward its debt commitments. The creditors are of course insisting on a bigger figure than Russia is proposing on the basis of what it can actually afford.

The first reaction to the proposals made in Hong Kong will probably be learned in the next few days from the results of Boris Yeltsin's talks with Francois Mitterrand.

Chubays Signs Credit Agreement With EBRD

LD1603230493 Moscow Russian Television Network in Russian 1700 GMT 16 Mar 93

[From the "Vesti" newscast]

[Text] Jacques Attali, president of the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, and Deputy Prime Minister Anatoliy Chubays, chairman of the state committee for managing state property, have signed an agreement in London on the first credit for expanding the privatization program in Russia. It is for 43.8 million dollars.

Eighth Congress of People's Deputies

Officials Continue To React to Congress Outcome

Early General Elections Urged

MK1603124493 Moscow NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA in Russian 16 Mar 93 p 1

[Interview with Andranik Migranyan, member of the Presidential Council, by Anna Ostapchuk under "Alternative" rubric: "President Himself Must Call General Election"; place and date not given]

[Text] [Ostapchuk] What in your view are the congress' main results?

[Migranyan] The first and most important result is the general weakening of authority in Russia, in the first place that of the center, and, consequently, the strengthening of the Federation subjects. The latter is the second result. And the third one is a relative strengthening of the government and its independence.

[Ostapchuk] Currently, many people call Chernomyrdin a consolidating [konsolidiruyushchiy] figure. Do you agree with this assessment?

[Migranyan] Unfortunately, Chernomyrdin cannot be a consolidating figure. By strengthening the government's hand, the Congress was pursuing the aim of weakening the president. As a result, Chernomyrdin's positions have been strengthened insufficiently, but Yeltsin has proved seriously weakened. Given the current balance of political power and the current leaders' existing authority, none of them is capable of becoming a real consolidating force.

[Ostapchuk] What line of conduct would you advise the president to follow now?

[Migranyan] The president can propose an immediate early general election. The Congress demonstrated its unwillingness to consider this subject. By all appearances, the deputy corps is unprepared for an early election. This is confirmed by the Congress decision to hand over the drafting of the law on early elections to a Supreme Soviet session, with the outcome at the Supreme Soviet being anything but clear. Yeltsin, however, has for the moment let the initiative slip out of his hands, too. That is why he himself must propose that an early general election be held in the very near future.

And another thing. If the president manages to give the ongoing "roundtable" meeting the status of an institution of national accord, its opinion will be much more weighty than the opinion of this particular Congress. Its opinion will be sufficient grounds for submitting the decision to another Congress for review and, in the event that the Congress fails to approve it, for acting in accordance with the roundtable decisions and bypassing the Congress; by refusing to approve the roundtable decision, the Congress will have demonstrated that it is out of step with the processes under way in society.

[Ostapchuk] As far as early elections are concerned, however, the deputies and the presidential side differ sharply. The former believe that both should be reelected at one time, while the presidential side is of the opinion that a one-year difference should be observed.

[Migranyan] The president himself must call early general elections immediately. Today no one can seriously compete with him.

[Ostapchuk] What will be the actual consequences of a plebiscite if the president finally opts for it?

[Migranyan] I think that most Russians [rossiyane] will vote in the president's favor. All opinion polls show that the Congress has a very low approval rating. Practically, it is common knowledge that a poll can have no political effect and may only be used as a means to bring moral and political pressure to bear on the Congress. On the other hand, the Supreme Soviet may take countersteps and conduct its own poll of a different kind. Each side will be able to claim then that it in fact represents public opinion.

[Ostapchuk] How do you assess the arguments against the referendum made in the Congress decree? Is there a real danger, or is it demagoguery?

[Migranyan] Arguments against the referendum are not demagoguery. On the other hand, however, the weakening of the federation authorities following the Congress makes the position very vulnerable even without a referendum. Only an analysis taking into account the very many factors involved could show which would be worse. In principle, the unwillingness of the federation subjects to accept the referendum has only one underlying cause. At present, Russia's republics are unilaterally seizing more and more powers that are not subject to the center's control; however, they are doing it discreetly—why should they openly set themselves in opposition to the center as long as they are able to exploit its weakness? In the event of a referendum, they would have to defy the center openly, which would bring about the consolidation of the center's various political forces, once confronted with the real risk of Russia's breakup.

Yeltsin Representative Views Congress

LD1603180093 St. Petersburg Radio St. Petersburg in Russian 1500 GMT 16 Mar 93

[Text] The disappearance of the balance of power in the aftermath of the Eighth Congress of People's Deputies of Russia will lead to the disappearance of human rights, Sergey Tsyplyayev, the president's representative in St. Petersburg and Leningrad Oblast, told a news conference today. As for the outcome of the Congress, it is well known that the president's proposals were virtually rejected by the deputies. The referendum was also thwarted. I believe that the blame falls both on the

Supreme Soviet and on the president, who failed to prepare the questions for it.

In Tsyplyayev's view, the Congress has discredited itself and has, on the whole, undermined federal authority. The decisions made by this top body of power lead to the exacerbation of administrative and legal chaos in the country. Russia's citizens, who have been denied the right to express their view at the referendum, are the losers in this political fight. The Congress also ignored the will of two and a half million inhabitants of Russia who said that the referendum should be held.

Shakhray on 'Weakened Russia'

PM1603201593 Moscow ROSSIYSKIYE VESTI in Russian 17 Mar 93 p 1

[Unattributed account of interview with Vice Premier Sergey Shakhray: "Sergey Shakhray: 'The Congress Has Weakened Russia'"—first paragraph is introduction]

[Text] A Security Council session will take place today which will examine options for action and the political priorities in the existing situation. Sergey Shakhray, vice premier of the Russian Federation Government talked about this in an interview for ROSSIYSKIYE VESTI.

[Shakhray] As of the beginning of February, the president started to conduct a single-minded program of action so that the Congress might pass off constructively. These included consultations with all political forces, representatives of the regions, and industrialists. In general, the majority of deputies—and meetings with them proved this—came to Moscow in order somehow to formalize and register the accord reached during the runup. But unfortunately, it is also possible to manipulate a congress. I will cite just two examples here. The president combined his own draft Congress decree with what was proposed by the heads of republics, and kray and oblast administrations. I will note that it was a constructive, compromise draft, but the person presiding did not even give the president's representatives the floor, saying that the Congress has three drafts, and deliberately split up the combined draft. As you will recall, together the presidential draft and the heads of republics' draft attracted over 900 votes.

The president's initiatives, constructive initiatives, simply were not discussed and were not put to the vote at the Congress. And as a result it proved possible to impose upon Congress those decisions which it subsequently adopted.

In my view, there are two main negative factors in the outcome of the Congress. The first is that Russia has been weakened by this Congress. When the central power tries to settle scores at the Congress by dragging up unverified facts and demonstrates an inability to act in a coordinated manner, the Russian state is weakened.

The second negative result is that the Congress may mark the end of the smooth stage of reforming the Russian state and Russian society. Again Russia is being pushed toward revolution, chaos, and anarchy. But in no event must this threshold be crossed.

Right now, the Russian Federation president is actively holding consultations and examining the various options for action. Today a Security Council sitting will take place, but one thing must be clear to everyone: Nobody—neither the Congress, the president, nor anybody else—can adopt any kind of emergency procedure [chrezvychayshchina—slightly vague, slangy expression; nb. usual vernacular for 'state of emergency' is chrezvychaynoye polozheniye] or any similar measures now. The Russian Federation Government has been set the task of working peacefully, confidently. And I think that the government will concentrate on the primary economic tasks. The priorities are identified as follows: the fuel and energy complex, the agrarian sector, especially the sowing campaign, the military-industrial complex, conversion, and basic science.

The government must now reactivate and concentrate in its hands the levers for running the Russian state. As deputy chairman, I was given one month at a recent session to work through this very problem—the problem of the "manageability" of state property, the problem of state control over the effective, so to speak, utilization and operation of forms of ownership.

Over the next few days, the president will set out the political priorities. They are first and foremost political stability, national accord, interethnic peace, and the security of Russian Federation citizens. It may be that the president will have to carry out a poll of the population in order to elucidatet public opinion. At any rate, the president will continue the quest for a compromise with other political forces because, without national accord, it is impossible to get out of this impasse. In principle, we are all in the same boat. But unfortunately, up to now we have been drilling a hole in the bottom. Some are doing this constitutionally, some unconstitutionally, but we are all of us drilling, when some of us should be rowing and others bailing out the water.

I am sure that history will put everything in its place.

Yastrzhembskiy Gives Briefing

LD1603235293 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1415 GMT 16 Mar 93

[By ITAR-TASS diplomatic correspondent Sergey Postanogov]

[Text] Moscow, 16 Mar—The public and the ruling circles abroad are profoundly worried about the results of the recent Congress of Russian People's Deputies and by the deepening crisis in the country, Sergey Yastrzhembskiy, director of the Russian Federation Foreign Ministry information and press department, said at a briefing today. He was commenting, at journalists' requests, on the foreign public and political figures' reaction to the Congress. Foreign observers, he said, are

of the view that despite a certain weakening of the positions, there is currently no more popular leader in Russia than Boris Yeltsin. An analysis of the reactions makes it possible to conclude, added Sergey Yastrzhembskiy, that the Congress results have, possibly, increased Boris Yeltsin's rating in Russia. Practically all prominent figures abroad, said the Russian Federation Foreign Ministry spokesman, currently appeal for "substantial, real, and immediate assistance" for Russia's first democratically elected president, who is the main guarantor of democratic transformations and the preservation of the unity of the Russian Federation.

Notes International Concern

OW1603173293 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1709 GMT 16 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] The first overviews of foreign-media comments on the way the Eighth Special Congress of People's Deputies was run and the steps it took show deep concern on the part of the international community and foreign governments over the deepening political crisis in Russia. This was what Sergey Yastrzhembskiy, Director of the Foreign Ministry's Information and Press Department, told journalists at a Moscow briefing Tuesday [16 March].

He said that the Congress made the Russian situation confused which is an indication of political instability in the country. The information analysis also shows, the ministry spokesman said, that no political leader's popularity in Russia exceeds that of President Yeltsin. His popularity rating increased during the Congress and the person of Yeltsin is seen in the West as the chief guarantor of keeping the Russian Federation in one piece.

Sobchak Sees 'No Specific Results'

LD1703084293 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 0801 GMT 17 Mar 93

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Lyudmila Fomicheva]

[Text] St. Petersburg March 17 TASS—"The extraordinary congress, the next in turn, has brought no specific results," St. Petersburg Mayor Anatoliy Sobchak told ITAR-TASS. "It made clear, however, that a fierce struggle is going on between the supporters and opponents of the reform. The congress is playing the part of the rallying centre wishing to put an end to the reform."

The only way for the country to resolve its problems is to adopt a decision soon on the convocation of a constituent assembly. The St. Petersburg mayor believes the constituent assembly should be made up of representatives of subjects of the Federation (regions, territories and republics integrated in the Russian Federation) even without holding general elections of delegates to the assembly.

The reform has stumbled over the system of Soviet power, Sobchak continued, which does not make it possible to resolve any problem. The impression is that many people's delegates to the congress together with its leader Khasbulatov are interested in discrediting the existing authorities as much as possible in order to bring the nation to a state in which it will be all the same to people whether or not another dictator comes to power and what kind of a regime he will impose.

"We should not reconcile ourselves to it, because we cannot give up our own future as a hopeless case at the very beginning of our way to democracy. We have a president, who has both the rights and possibilities to announce the convocation of a constitutional assembly or a referendum. Finally, we have powerful democratic organisations, which should pool their efforts in the struggle for the convocation of the constitutional assembly.

"Then, I hope, we shall achieve success," Anatoliy Sobchak said.

Regional Political Leaders Cited

OW1603204093 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1943 GMT 16 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] **Tatarstan's President Calls the Results of 8th Congress of People's Deputies "Discouraging"**

"Discouraging" was the word used by Tatarstan's President Mintimer Shamiyev in his comment on the outcome of the 8th Congress of People's Deputies during an interview for INTERFAX on Tuesday [16 March]. Our hopes that the Congress would further the "fragile conciliation which was attained at the 7th Congress have not materialized," he said.

In the opinion of Mr. Shamiyev, "the search for culprits and enemies" would be posing a great danger in the future. Russia's incumbent government, which enjoys the support of both the president and the parliament, he said, serves as a "bridge" between the two branches of power. The Tatar president said he is convinced that this factor should be capitalized on in order that the government be able to go ahead with its reforms.

In the words of Mr. Shamiyev, the confrontation between branches of power in Moscow is not likely to inflame any conflicts in Russia's various regions. Moreover, "under these conditions, it would be advisable for the center to listen to the opinions expressed by the heads of regional administrations and rely on them, for they reflect the opinions of the people who live there, rather than the ambitions of individual politicians."

Luzhkov Does Not Agree That the President Lost at the Congress

Yuriy Luzhkov, Moscow Mayor, emphatically rejected the notion that President Boris Yeltsin "lost a second

congress in a row." Speaking on Moscow television he insisted that Yeltsin "has shown Russia and the world a model of calm and staunchness.... In the name of Russia's interests the president withstood in a dignified way the difficult and, occasionally, humiliating climate prevailing in the congress."

The mayor of the Russian capital thinks that the Congress of People's Deputies did not solve a single problem but "significantly weakened the over-all potential of the state's central authority."

Russia "does not need such congresses," Luzhkov said.

Karelian Parliament Chairman Satisfied With Congress of People's Deputies

The chairman of the parliament of Karelia, Viktor Stepanov, said the main achievement of the Eighth Congress of People's Deputies was the fact that all its decisions were in line with the Constitution. Addressing a news conference in Petrozavodsk, he said this had been the first congress to pass "decisions not contradicting the Constitution of the Russian Federation and to vest no one with additional powers."

Stepanov did not agree that the Congress had been pro-communist in character. "We are going through a normal constitutional process, which should not be dramatized," he said.

Personal Ambitions Clash at Congresses of People's Deputies, Says Komi Parliament's Head

Congresses of people's deputies are becoming scenes of clashes based on personal ambitions, the chairman of the parliament of the Komi Republic, Yuriy Spiridonov, said at a news conference in Syktyvkar on Tuesday.

Spiridonov commended the Council of the Heads of Republics, Territories and Regions for their efforts in implementing the Federal Treaty. "The council is taking the empire to pieces but is creating a single federal state," he said. He urged giving more independence to local administrations in order to at last enable them to deal with economic problems. Then "clashes of ambitions in the upper echelons of authority would make no sense," he said.

Supreme Soviet Spokesmen Comment

OW1603173493 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1709 GMT 16 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Every other letter from Russian voters to the Supreme Soviet sent before and during the recent Congress of People's Deputies in Moscow expresses support to "the principled stand that the Congress took on strict compliance with the country's Constitution by all branches of power", spokesmen of the Russian Parliament said on Tuesday [16 March].

The results of a survey of the voters' letters circulated in Moscow indicate that more than 76 percent of the letter writers were skeptical about President Yeltsin's and his government's performance while a little over 11 percent of respondents gave them a favorable rating.

Parliamentary spokesmen say most Russians are worried about the negative effects of economic reform and inadequate social security benefits. They said Russian citizens did not back the media-spread views about Congress inefficiency and the failure of its resolutions to reflect the general feeling on the streets.

Earlier in the day, spokesman for the Russian President Vyacheslav Kostikov said that only one letter in thirty expressed opposition to President Yeltsin, with others voicing support and calling on Yeltsin to be firm in defence of the country's democratic and economic reforms. Kostikov said most letters were highly critical of the resolutions adopted by the 8th Congress.

Volskiy Comments

LD1603150093 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1447 GMT 16 Mar 93

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent]

[Text] Moscow March 16 TASS—"The main positive result of the Eighth Congress of Russian People's Deputies is that it granted sufficiently broad rights to the government," Arkadiy Volskiy, president of the Russian Union of Industrialists and Entrepreneurs, said in an interview published in the PRAVDA newspaper today. According to Arkadiy Volskiy, the Congress "specifically has broadened the rights of the Cabinet of Ministers in directing economy and other spheres of the country's life."

Arkadiy Volskiy believes that "the first thing Russian Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin should do is to bring the composition of the Cabinet into line with the course he is going to pursue. It seems to me the time has come to form a government of specialists, before new elections."

"We ought to support Viktor Chernomyrdin now," Arkadiy Volskiy noted. According to him, the prime minister is a "sober-minded man, a highly skilled specialist adherent to the course of reforms."

"Nobody needs a referendum," the president of the Russian Union of Industrialists and Entrepreneurs pointed out.

Further on Volskiy Remarks

PM1703112593 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 16 Mar 93 p 2

[Interview with Arkadiy Volskiy, president of the Russian Union of Industrialists and Entrepreneurs, by correspondent Aleksandr Bykovskiy; place and date not

given: "'No one Needs Referendum,' Arkadiy Volskiy Believes"—first paragraph is introduction]

[Text] At the request of our correspondent Aleksandr Bykovskiy, Arkadiy Volskiy, president of the Russian Union of Industrialists and Entrepreneurs, comments on the results of the eighth congress.

[Volskiy] I believe that the main positive result of the congress is that it granted the government quite broad rights. It is a case in particular of the expansion of the cabinet's potential for leading the economy and other spheres of the country's life.

I very much regret that television, particularly "Ostankino," and other mass media have a one-sided view of the congress, only from the narrow position of whether or not there will be a referendum. Yet actually no one needs a referendum.

Unfortunately, the other side is also displaying a certain one-sidedness in interpreting the congress results. The formula "congress of victors" has even appeared. But we know from the country's history what makes this analogy memorable. In the present situation it is simply stupid to seek victors or vanquished. It is unacceptable in principle: There can be no victors or vanquished if it is a case of the country's destiny.

[Bykovskiy] But will Chernomyrdin be able to use these powers properly? Let us be frank: Since his appointment as chairman of the cabinet there have, alas, be no fundamental changes in the government program...

[Volskiy] Chernomyrdin himself is a sober-minded man, a highly qualified specialist devoted to the course aimed at reforms. And we must support Viktor Stepanovich today.

Of course, he has not had the opportunity to form the cabinet as perhaps he considered necessary. And the first thing the government chairman must do today is to bring the cabinet personnel into line with the course which he intends to steer. It seems to me that the question of the formation of a government of specialists until new elections has become an urgent one in our country... Specialists who would not shout: Let's stage show trials of bankrupt enterprises as soon as possible and introduced unemployment as soon as possible...

Cossacks, Trade Union Leaders Support Yeltsin

LD1603221593 Moscow Russian Television Network in Russian 1700 GMT 16 Mar 93

[By unidentified correspondent; from the "Vesti" newscast]

[Text] A meeting took place in Moscow between eight chiefs of the Cossack forces of Russia and the leaders of a number of trade unions and creative unions and also political parties, at which it was decided to set up an association of the electorate in support of the president. This organization has become necessary because of the decisions of the eighth congress which, in the opinion of the initiating group, virtually removes the head of the Russian state from power.

[Ye. Nagay, chief of the Kuban Cossack forces] We are indignant at what happened at the eighth congress. It now makes possible a renaissance of those communist party cells in the regions of our country.

[A. Sergeyev, chairman of the Russian miners' trade union] I would like to tell the esteemed people's deputies not to delude themselves. Apart from the fact that we have here the miners and the Cossacks, there are other social organizations which will not allow the the incipient Russian movement to be stifled, a movement which wishes to live in a free Russia and which does not wish to be oppressed by the nomenklatura.

'Independent Civic Initiative' Against Khasbulatov

PM1603141593 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 16 Mar 93 First Edition p 2

[Letter from Members of the "Independent Civic Initiative" Group Sergey Averintsev, Yuriy Afanasyev, Leonid Batkin, Vladimir Bibler, Yuriy Burtin, Kronid Lyubarskiy, Marina Pavlova-Silvanskaya, and Lef Timofeyev: "Spirit of Cold War Resurrected"]

[Text] Addressing the closing session of the Eighth Congress of People's Deputies, Ruslan Khasbulatov staggered the public yet again, this time by his explanation of the causes of the disintegration of the Warsaw Pact and the USSR. The causes were, it transpires, not internal, but external—the intrigues of transatlantic enemies, American imperialism.

We have thus come full circle. What party propaganda dinned into our heads for decades to justify the Soviet empire's self-isolation from the rest of the world and what only the "heroes" of the State Committee for the State of Emergency and the journalists on DEN have ventured to say of late we now hear from the lips of the speaker of the Russian "parliament." It does not matter at all whether he really professes such views or is merely playing the "patriotic" card to enlist the future support of communist-chauvinist reaction—one way or another, he has clearly shown the threat which the victory he has won poses to Russia and the whole world.

It is only natural, given such a foreign policy leaning, that Khasbulatov should dislike the considered and on the whole successful policy pursued by the Russian Foreign Ministry led by Andrey Kozyrev—a policy of active cooperation with all countries while maintaining specially close friendly ties with the republics of the former USSR. Hence Khasbulatov's demand for Kozyrev's immediate replacement and then, on top of this, the demand (without discussion or a vote) that it possess the status of a Congress instruction to the Supreme Soviet.

We roundly condemn Khasbulatov's statement, which resurrects the spirit of the cold war and is aimed at isolating our country anew and worsening its relations with the civilized world. We urge Russian President Boris Yeltsin to keep Kozyrev in his post whatever decision the Supreme Soviet may make regarding him. It is not only the fact that Kozyrev is a real professional and one of the strongest ministers in our current government. He embodies one foreign policy, while Khasbulatov and his minions represent another, diametrically opposed one. Ultimately, Russia has to decide today whom to side with and whom it feels closer to: Saddam Husayn, Fidel Castro, and the Serbian Communist and nationalist Slobodan Milosevic, or the prosperous Western democracies and the countries of Eastern Europe which have embarked on the democratic path of development. Russia's future hinges directly on that choice.

[Signed] Members of the "Independent Civic Initiative" group: Sergey Averintsev, Yuriy Afanasyev, Leonid Batkin, Vladimir Bibler, Yuriy Burtin, Kronid Lyubarskiy, Marina Pavlova-Silvanskaya, and Lef Timofeyev

Democrats on 'Revenge of Forces of Reaction'

PM1603145993 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 16 Mar 93 First Edition p 2

[Georgiy Ivanov-Smolenskiy report: "Democrats See Extraordinary Congress As Revenge of Forces of Reaction"]

[Text] The latest consultative conference of representatives of political parties, public associations, and professional and creative unions was held at Moscow City Hall Monday. More than 50 democratically minded organizations took part in its work. The participants in the conference discussed the results of the Eighth Congress and the postcongress political situation in Russia.

The congress was unanimously seen as "historical revenge on the part of the forces of reaction" and the stance of the Supreme Soviet Presidium and its speaker as virtually at one with the basic political precepts of the nationalist-communist "implacable opposition." The congress, it was observed at the conference, had virtually usurped power in the country, which places on the agenda the need for coordinated action to save freedom as in the time of combating the communist regime.

In their speeches the leaders of parties and professional and creative unions Yu. Chernichenko, T. Gdlyan, M. Salye, A. Sergeyev, and V. Oskotskiy spoke of the need to discard disagreements forthwith and create a broad United Democratic Bloc [Obyedinennyy demokraticheskiy blok]. The bloc will include, alongside such politically battle-hardened battalions as Democratic Russia and the Independent Trade Union of Miners, the private farmers united in the Peasant Party, the best entrepreneurs, the creative and scientific intelligentia, and the Cossacks. The congress made the decision to set up a special task force to ensure operational coordination of democrats' actions at critical moments in the political struggle.

The entry of the Cossacks into the emerging alliance of forces supporting reforms and the president can be regarded as new. The statement announced at the conference and signed by a number of Cossack hetmans leaves no doubt of the support for presidential power in Russia and the resolve to instill order in the state once and for all. It is significant that the Cossacks, strong supporters of an integral and indivisible Russian state, find themselves in the political camp opposed to the inveterate "patriots" who make it a rule to lay down the law at every congress "on the people's behalf."

The conference participants also noted that Boris Yeltsin should formulate his stances on key issues more clearly if he wishes to have timely and more energetic support from the democrats. An "Appeal to the Citizens and the President of Russia" was adopted. It was resolved to hold a Russia-wide demonstration 28 March in support of democracy, reforms, and the Russian president.

Moscow Poll Shows More Yeltsin Supporters

PM1703103793 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 17 Mar 93 First Edition p 4

[Article by Sociology of Parliamentarianism Director Nugzar Betaneli: "More Referendum Supporters in Wake of Eighth Congress"]

[Text] The independent Sociology of Parliamentarianism Institute has conducted its latest weekly poll of a representative sample of Muscovites. This is what is shown by a comparative analysis.

The Eighth Congress of People's Deputies has completed its work, but the confrontation between Russian politicians and the legislative and executive branches continues. But does this worry "ordinary" voters? As the poll showed, most Muscovites—59 percent—are worried about the current conflict between the branches of power, 27 percent are not worried, and 14 percent find it difficult to make up their mind about what is happening in political life. Many (73 percent in November and 71 percent in March) continue to believe that a "power struggle" and "personal ambitions" lie at the root of the political conflict. Only a minority see it as a fundamental difference of economic (4 percent) or political (6 percent) views and attitudes.

Evidently the "clash" at the Congress is once again "boosting" political activeness. The population is weighed down with the burdens of economic life: 73 percent are dissatisfied with their present life, 41 percent cannot afford the new prices, and 49 percent consider themselves "poor" or "below the poverty line." Interest and trust in politicians is declining. The renewed conflict offers Russia's leaders on "both" sides the chance to attract public attention. An example of this is voters'

increased interest in a Russia-wide referendum. Compare for yourself: Holding a referendum was considered "necessary or essential" by 23 percent on 18 February and 31 percent on 11 March. The number of Muscovites who think they would participate in a referendum has also risen somewhat: from 37 percent in February to 42 percent in March.

Judging by the poll, the Congress' predilection toward conflict with the president is not propitious for the legislative branch in historical terms. B. Yeltsin's hopes of support from ordinary voters are more realistic. But this balance of possibilities of success is not to do with the personalities involved but is of a more deep-rooted nature dictated by changes in the mass mood.

The decisive shift toward self-government and the preference for representative organs of power so typical of the late eighties have been replaced by public disillusionment about the effectiveness of the representatives of democracy in Russia and hopes for strong executive power. This trend is clearly visible in Muscovites' 11 March answers to the questions which the president proposes should be put to a referendum: 47 percent agree that the Russian Federation should be a presidential republic, 13 percent disagree, and 40 percent don't know. Only 34 percent agree that a bicameral parliament should be Russia's sole supreme legislative body, 14 percent disagree, and 52 percent don't know.

It appears that the actual solution to this question—which is in fact a question of Russian citizens' economic independence—will ultimately determine the success or otherwise of any Russian politician. As for the present situation, the ratings of political leaders are as follows: The number of Muscovites with a "positive attitude to" or "positive interest in" Russian President B. Yeltsin's activity increased from 30 percent on 18 February to 36 percent on 11 March, while there has been a slight decline in the number with a "wary" or "negative" attitude—44 percent in February and 42 percent in March. Some 13 percent are "indifferent" and 9 percent don't know.

At first glance there has been virtually no change in Supreme Soviet Chairman R. Khasbulatov's rating: 12 percent of Muscovites have a "positive attitude to" or a "positive interest in" his activity, 64 percent are "wary" or "negative," 13 percent are "indifferent," and 11 percent don't know.

Congress Decree on Observance of Constitution

PM1603123393 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 16 Mar 93 p 1

[Decree of the Eighth Congress of Russian Federation People's Deputies "On the Observance of the Russian Federation Constitution (Fundamental Law) by the Supreme Organs of State Power and Officials"]

[Text] The Russian Federation Congress of People's Deputies decrees:

1. That the message of the Russian Federation Constitutional Court to the Russian Federation Supreme Soviet on the state of constitutional legality in the Russian Federation be taken into account.

2. That the Russian Federation president, Russian Federation Supreme Soviet, and Russian Federation government, the legislative and executive organs of power of the republics within the Russian Federation, the organs of state power and management ofthe autonomous oblast, autonomous okrugs, krays, and oblasts, and cities of Moscow and St. Petersburg be asked within three months to bring the laws and other normative acts they have adopted into line with the Russian Federation constitution.

3. That within three months the Russian Federation Supreme Soviet adopt a law on the mechanism for fulfilling the decisions of the Russian Federation Constitutional Court and on responsibility for nonfulfillment of these decisions.

On Possible Early Elections

PM1603155993 Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 16 Mar 93 First Edition p 2

[Decree No. 4628-1 of the Russian Federation Congress of People's Deputies "On Amendments and Additions to the Russian Federation Constitution on the Question of the Possibility of Holding Early Elections for Russian Federation People's Deputies and the Russian Federation President," dated Moscow, the Kremlin, 13 March 1993 and signed by Russian Federation Supreme Soviet Chairman R.I. Khasbulatov]

[Text] The Russian Federation Congress of People's Deputies decrees:

That the Russian Federation Supreme Soviet be tasked with examining the issue of the expediency of formulating a Russian Federation draft law "On Amendments and Additions to the Russian Federation—Russian—Constitution (Fundamental Law)" envisaging the possibility of holding early elections for Russian Federation people's deputies and Russian Federation president.

[Signed] Russian Federation Supreme Soviet Chairman R.I. Khasbulatov
[Dated] Moscow, the Kremlin
13 March 1993
No. 4628-1

Regional Deputies on Views of Yeltsin, Congress

PM1603155793 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 13 Mar 93 p 1

[Viktor Trushkov and Aleksandr Shinkin report: "Eighth Congress of People's Deputies: The President May Be the President, But Why Smash Up the Tables..."]

[Excerpt] [passage omitted] **What Should We Expect the Morning After?**

Our conversations with deputies did not dispel people's worries, but for some reason there was no whipping up of concern after the president's demarches.

I. Shashviashvili represents voters in the Kuzbass. He agrees that B. Yeltsin has support there. Some 10-15 percent of miners support the Independent Miners Union, which the "democrats" control. They are demanding that the Congress of People's Deputies be dissolved and the soviets disbanded. But the remaining inhabitants of the Kuzbass, who, like the whole country, are suffering from the rockslide of reforms, impoverishment, and rampant corruption, have long doubted that the president is capable of extricating the country from the crisis.

O. Plotnikov, one of the "Smena-New Policy" faction's leaders, snidely noted that the president does not want to abandon his power, as well as his "principles." But his recent hysteria annoyed not only the deputies but also the majority of Russians. It is not impossible that they will be able to find a more balanced and businesslike president.

V. Zubkov shared his impressions of his Penza voters' reaction to the anti-people economic reforms. Owing to the sharp fall in agricultural production in the oblast, food supplies have deteriorated very badly.

We asked the Uralmash workers' envoy V. Zhenin how the population of the Urals now regards the president. His reply was very convincing: The worse the economic situation becomes, the worse the attitude to the president is.

So the majority of deputies are sure that there will be no social explosion tomorrow. But Supreme Soviet Chairman R. Khasbulatov warned that the deputies will observe very closely indeed how events develop tomorrow.

This "tomorrow" has arrived. The Congress is continuing its work today. Yesterday it adopted a decision to examine the fate of the referendum and the possibility of holding early elections.

Regions Gain Strength in Power Struggle

MK1603160393 Moscow NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA in Russian 16 Mar 93 p 1

[Vitaliy Portnikov article in "Opinion" column: "The 'Belovezhskiy Period' in Russian History Has Begun. This Is the Main Result of the Deputies' Congress"]

[Text] Most observers today are talking about a considerable weakening of President Boris Yeltsin's positions, waiting for the president's reaction to the decisions of the extraordinary Congress of Russian Deputies, and getting ready to watch the "treacherous" Khasbulatov play the "Chernomyrdin card." However, confrontation between the branches of power in Russia is nothing new. Nonetheless, the Congress session just ended was marked by a factor that hitherto had not played a serious role in political struggle: leaders of the republics and heads of religious [as published] administrations. They have certainly come out with various appeals, proposals, and proclamations in the past, but never has their voice sounded so weighty, and never have the two power branches—the presidential and the legislative—appealed to the regional leaders so openly. Primarily it is the strengthening of the republican leaders that we should be talking about here, since in the oblasts and krays political processes are not yet developing with quite so much intensity, and furthermore the status of "number one person" is unclear, i.e. an oblast soviet chairman, administration head, or president's representative does not have the legitimacy that a republican president or a supreme soviet chairman can boast. Consequently, oblast leaders lack the omnipotence that allows to independent decisions to be made without having to look over their shoulder at the Center.

"If the federal government, the president, and the parliament recognize the objective strengthening of their role, which is bound to strengthen because federal authority is weakening, and they bring federal mechanisms into operation in good time, that will be a good thing. If federal authority continues to weaken, however, that will lead to a strengthening of separatism," Ramazan Abdulatipov, chairman of the Russian parliament chamber of nationalities, observed after the Congress. This remark from a man who is every day confronted with problems of ethnic-state structure is pretty apt. If federal authority weakens, the local authorities, especially in the republics, will have something to put up against the Moscow mechanism that has gone out of control: their own power structures, their own, much more efficient interaction among the power branches, and, most important, their own concept of state formation that is still lacking in the Russian Federation. These concepts may be different—from an economic concept in Karelia to an ethnic-civil one (plus oil) in Tatarstan, but they do exist. They work and they guarantee stability against the backdrop of increasing turmoil in Moscow.

It would be strange and hypocritical to accuse the republican leaders of separatism. Just like many of the former Union republic politicians, they are obviously trying to salvage the Center, but making it a coordinating and not a ruling body. Just like the Union Congress, the Russian Congress will not listen to them—for the time being, of course. Yakutia President Mikhail Nikolayev proposed that the Council of Heads of Republics take on the job of intermediary—a role occupied at the previous congress by Valeriy Zorkin. At that time the deputies welcomed Zorkin because they were not afraid (as it transpires, they need not have been) of his influence and role. The republican leaders' proposal "went unheard," because they were perceived as real contenders for the much desired power that in a little while, after the buttons had been pressed one more time, would fade

away in the offices of the White House. Meanwhile power is draining away altogether from the Moscow offices in a wide, swollen river to Ufa, Kazan, and Saratov.

No one is thinking about the illogical nature of the situation itself. If a republican leader announces from a rostrum that a federal referendum will lead to the disintegration of Russia, he therefore proclaims his refusal to hold that event. Deputies may applaud just the same. However, if today most of the republics do hold this federal event on their territories, is there a guarantee that in another year or two they will agree to hold another one? For example, elections of deputies? Who will then elect people to sit in the Kremlin? It appears that the disintegration of Russia is a foregone conclusion, the only problem being how to stave it off by a few months. To hide for a certain time from the people the fact that federal laws are not working across a greater part of the territory.

As usual, there are powerful federal structures nearby that believe that they are also in control of this process and can stop everything. At any moment. Well, this is a case of the famous "delusion of Gorbachev," a man confident that he was running perestroyka. The more central authority weakens, the more insecure are those who are actually carrying out the will of the powerful structures at local level, and the faster they seek to integrate with the local elite. The results of this integration are also easy to observe in the example of the now defunct Union.

So, the "Belovezhskiy period" in the history of the Russian state has begun. Well, before the Union fell apart, many were asking the nonrhetorical question: Can the territorial integrity of the Russian Federation be maintained? Instead of an answer they heard reproaches for a lack of patriotism from highly placed politicians now finally squeezed out of the power structures. Incidentally, those politicians were right. Unlike the Soviet Union, the Russian Federation could be maintained on condition that the "strong Center—strong republics" formula is observed. At the time the Belovezhskaya Forest agreement was concluded, the strong Center still existed, while the republics were just beginning to gain strength. However, the "weak center—strong republics" formula has not as yet guaranteed a secure future to any state.

Now it is difficult to talk about the forms the "Belovezhskiy process" is likely to take in the Russian Federation, about its pace and implications. However, in the process of the power struggle everybody is ready to play the card of strengthening the regions: the president, the parliament, and the numerous aspirants to first or second roles. Apparently, the republican leaders (just like the leaders of the regions, when they emerge) will not be obedient puppets in this game.

Article Applauds Congress 'Firmness'

PM1603162693 Moscow SOVETSKAYA ROSSIYA in Russian 16 Mar 93 p 1

[Vladimir Isakov "Parliamentary Diary": "Confrontation"]

[Text] For me, the key event of the Congress was not the president's speech, nor the emotional outburst by Khasbulatov, shaking his fist at the "imperialists across the ocean," nor even the pitiful attempts by Democratic Russia and its ilk to wreck the Congress, but a short, three-minute intervention by Vladimir Shumeyko, first deputy chairman of the government (which was repeated on "Itogi" on Sunday). Speaking in support of the president's draft decree providing for the postponement of the referendum to 25 April, he said (I quote from my own notes):

"There are two possible ways out of the crisis. One is the implementation of reforms in a fairly short historical period, structural reorganization, a stringent financial and credit policy, rapid privatization, and targeted social protection. The other is a slow entry into the market and the preservation of state regulation of prices. In my view that means abandoning the reforms. The president is for the first option. The Supreme Soviet is for the second. We are talking about an uncompromising struggle over these two possible ways out of the crisis..."

This admission took my breath away. And not because Shumeyko was lying (on the contrary, this time he was absolutely right). But because his unexpected frankness overturned at a stroke the entire scenario of the president's game at the Congress. Unfortunately the microphones were busy, so I was unable to ask Vladimir Filippovich two small questions.

First: If you admit that we are talking about the course of the reforms and the possible ways out of the crisis, what price the president's remarks about a "constitutional coup," an "offensive by conservative forces," and the "restoration of the totalitarian Soviet communist system which was anathematized by our own people and rejected by the entire world community"? Is that some kind of joke? Or do you consider it reasonable for one option for reform to be defended by such dishonest means in the attempt to incite the people against the president's political opponents?

And the second question: If you are waging an uncompromising struggle for your own chosen course of reform, why not ask honestly and directly in the president's referendum: People, do you still trust me? Can you go on putting up with it? Do you consent to the continuation of my course of reform? Instead of which, the people are invited to vote for a "presidential republic" that no one knows anything about, and to approve everyone's right to own, enjoy, and use land... Is this not a cynical attempt to deceive the people and sell them, in attractive packaging, the dead duck of your own "reform"?

I am not going to talk about the reasons for V. Shumeyko's unexpected frankness. Maybe he did not have the text of his speech to hand, or the pages were mixed up. But what he let slip demonstrated yet again that **telling the truth is a mortal danger to the present regime**. Even a small tear in the curtain of lies, silence, and insincere political accusations permits a glimpse of terrifying adventurism and irresponsibility on the part of the people who are currently in power and are playing with the people's future.

A turbulent, noisy fairground of representative democracy, the Eighth Congress of People's Deputies was packed full of events big and small. What, in my view, are the main conclusions and lessons of the Congress that has just ended?

1. It should be admitted that this time B.N. Yeltsin failed to pull off his favorite trick. His attempt to lean on the Congress caused the Congress locomotive to drive right past the president and to continue on its planned course. Repeated attempts by the president's supporters to prevent a quorum and disrupt the work of the Congress looked pitiful and did not lead to success.

2. The system of separation of powers, which is still young in Russia, demonstrated its resilience. Two branches of power, by joining together, were able to counteract the folly of the third. One can only speculate what kind of tragedy would have awaited the country if this whole struggle had taken place in the conditions of a power monopoly. But why speculate—there is no shortage of examples of dictators' madness in history.

3. Despite frenzied pressure, the Congress showed firmness and canceled the Russia-wide referendum. At the same time the Congress decree does not rule out the holding of a referendum in future, on condition that consensus is achieved among the political forces and components of the Federation. The 20 billion rubles saved have been transferred for the needs of housing construction and social protection of servicemen.

4. The amendments to the Russian Federation Constitution which were "frozen" by the Seventh Congress have come into force. The Russian Federation Council of Ministers gains the right of legislative initiative and the Supreme Soviet gains the right to suspend unlawful presidential edicts pending their examination in the Constitutional Court. Article 121/6 of the Constitution comes into force—the article whereby the powers of the Russian Federation president may not be used to change the national-state structure of the Russian Federation or to dissolve any legally elected organs of state power, otherwise they (the powers) are immediately terminated.

5. The government's powers are widened in the sphere of management of state property and economic services and the drafting, coordination, and implementation of anticrisis programs. The chairmen of the Central Bank, the Pensions Fund, the Federal Property Fund, and the State Committee for Statistics are brought into the government.

6. The discussion of the second item on the agenda showed that gross violations of the Constitution are being perpetrated by both the president and the Supreme Soviet. The deputies and the Constitutional Court received assurances that this is intolerable and that all future activity by the supreme organs of power will be based strictly on compliance with the Fundamental Law.

7. The Eighth Congress showed that Russia is facing a terrible danger—the danger of a flareup of regional separatism. While the highest organs of power are settling scores and engaging in standoffs, their rights and duties are moving to the regions by default. "We call on people's deputies... to realize that Russia's fate is today being decided not in the Supreme Soviet or the Great Kremlin Palace, but in the component regions of the Federation Treaty." That is taken from the statement of heads of administrations... By creating unconstitutional power structures and investing them with powers and privileges, the Russian president is inflaming local separatism in the hope of sharing power between himself and the regional administrations.

8. Events around the Congress demonstrated the dangers inherent in a monopoly of the mass media, especially when the monopoly is held by the state power. The unhampered access to the mass media which the president and his supporters enjoy led to the temptation to use the power of the "fourth estate" in the political struggle, in intrigues and adventures. Even in the time of so-called stagnation state television and radio did not permit themselves to indulge in such shameless lies and distortion of the facts as during the Eighth Congress. Certain reports and commentaries are verging on incitement to mass disturbances, and should, in my view, be the subject of a parliamentary and judicial investigation.

What are the prospects for the development of the political process after the Congress? Possible scenarios for the development of events break down into two groups.

First (and most likely)—the continuation of confrontation. The mass media will be used to discredit the Congress decisions and the entire system of representative power and to create an atmosphere of crisis in the hope that people will grow tired of uncertainty and unpredictability, demand the imposition of order, and support "decisive actions by the president" to overcome "multiplicity of powers."

It cannot be ruled out that, contrary to common sense, an attempt will be made to organize a "presidential plebiscite." This could take place in certain of the most politicized cities, but will finally destroy the president's position and confidence in him in the regions.

The aim of this group of scenarios is more or less uniform: to hold out as long as possible, to privatize what remains to be privatized, and to wreck what remains to be wrecked.

The **second** group of scenarios involves a search for compromise, which in principle is still possible. If the president abandons his claim to determine the state's political course single-handed, observes the Constitution, hands over to the courts the corrupt elements entrenched in the presidential structures, and stops disrupting society with political intrigues, the situation will gradually return to normal. The opposition does not need crises. It fully recognizes that the collapse of the executive power is just as dangerous as the stifling of representative power, especially if you take into account that in our country the contradictions between the powers have taken on a political color and could kindle a far wider civil conflict in society.

But the "peaceful scenario" will hardly be to the liking of the president and his political sympathizers. The country's return to the basis of the law and common sense means political defeat for them. In fact, the whole "power crisis" arise precisely because they cannot implement their policy "under the rules"—within the framework of legality and constitutionality.

Most likely, instead of political compromise something different will be offered—horse-trading. Smart guys from the presidential structures will suggest "giving up" certain government members and bringing in two or three new members instead. Maybe even from the opposition! The slightly renewed cabinet will promptly be declared to be a "government of people's confidence," which will enable it, albeit with some scars, to clamber out of the trap while retaining the former political course.

I venture to suggest that the opposition will not fall for this ruse. Even Civic Union, which clearly has a weakness for "some nice little job," is hardly likely to want to join Yeltsin's next government in order to share with him the responsibility for the catastrophe into which he has led the country.

The period following the Congress promises to be a time of intensive political consultations and preparations for the issuing and receiving of power, unless, of course, our unpredictable president devises some unimaginable "variation" which goes beyond all the scenarios.

Conservatives' 'Manipulation' of People Hit

PM1603151593 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 13 Mar 93 First Edition p 8

["Editorial Viewpoint": "Only the People Have the Right To Speak on Behalf of the People"]

[Text] "And have you asked the people?"—this question can be heard incessantly at the Congress. Moreover, it is being posed by deputies of the most varied political orientation. But it is the Russian conservatives who resort to it particularly frequently and willingly. Obviously they consider this question an irresistible weapon capable of killing any reformist idea outright. Whatever the matter may concern—a presidential form of government, private land ownership, a constituent assembly, or a bicameral parliament instead of the Congress—opposition leaders respond to everything with a categorical "no" because "the people will not understand this," "the people will not support this."

An end may be put to the speculative manipulation of the "people's opinion" by a referendum, for which, among other things, the Russian deputies voted in December. The same deputies who are now trying to abrogate this referendum at their extraordinary Congress. And once again it is the same old "reasoning," once again we hear from the platforms and through the microphones: "My electorate does not support the idea of a referendum." "On behalf of my electorate, I declare that the people will not go to the polls."

In his speech at the Congress Supreme Soviet Deputy Chairman Nikolay Ryabov also appealed to people's moods. His sharp, confrontational speech, in which the December agreement was proclaimed erroneous, prompted many questions in the hall, including this one: On whose behalf was the rapporteur speaking? Ryabov replied that he had compiled the report on his own behalf. Doubtlessly sensing the hypocracy of this explanation, Khasbulatov rushed to help his deputy: "These ideas were not born simply of one mind, but from the whole of Russian society."

It seems that the speaker himself, even without any referednum, knows which ideas are being spawned by the "whole of Russian society" and has invested himself with the right to speak on behalf of the whole of this society.

However, where is the logic? If the top people in parliament, supported by the irreconcilable opposition, are firmly convinced that the people will not participate in a referendum, then where do they acquire the conviction that this same people will accept with enthusiasm the early elections which the Supreme Soviet chairman proves the need for at every turn? If, in the deputies' opinion, a referendum will further the dangerous arousal of society, on what do they base the belief that early elections will have a pacifying effect on this very same society?

However, we will not search for a logic here—there is none. There is just one thing—the indefatigable Bolshevik habit of speaking on behalf of the people while arrogantly showing no interest in what this people actually think. Likewise, there is the durable skill of adapting a nonexistent "public opinion" to the political climate, and to personal aims and intentions which are by no means unselfish.

Only the people can know whether they will participate in a referendum or not. And no deputy at the Congress is entitled to speak "on behalf of the people." By all means let them speak "through the microphone." Unless somebody has authorized the orator to do otherwise.

Congress of Deputies Proceedings Analyzed

PM1603134593 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 16 Mar 93 pp 1-2

[Article by Boris Slavin: "They Have Chosen Foreign Model..."]

[Text] The Eighth Extraordinary Congress of People's Deputies completed its work Saturday [13 March]. It adopted a number of documents designed to strengthen Russia's constitutional system. At the initiative of subjects of the Federation concerned for Russia's possible collapse, the congress repealed the referendum. It instructed the Supreme Soviet to elaborate a law on possible early elections of the president and people's deputies. At the same time, going halfway to meet the president and the head of government, the congress expanded the opportunities in the government's activity involving leadership of departments under the parliament's control.

How do various political forces assess the course and results of the congress? In various ways. Some believe that the congress was one more confirmation of our society's development along the path of democracy and the formation of a rule-of-law state. That, in particular, is how the results of its work were assessed by Khasbulatov and Zorkin. Other politicians, on the contrary, believe this congress to have been a concentration of conservative forces which accomplished a unique constitutional coup in March, totally depriving the president of power and asserting the power of the Communists. This highly dubious viewpoint is adhered to by those radical democrats who were in the absolute minority at the congress. One representative of this group ostentatiously renounced his duties as people's deputy, others demanded that the Constitutional Court deem the congress' decisions as contradicting the Constitution.

Whatever extreme assessments were given of the extraordinary congress, one thing is clear: The political struggle has not only not ended with its completion, it will obviously be drastically intensified in the very near future. New forms of the struggle will emerge. What they will be—a plebiscite, the introduction of presidential rule, or the introduction of tanks onto the streets—the future will show. All this has already been said at the congress. It is no accident that Khasbulatov, as he closed the congress, hinted that a situation could take shape in which the deputies would be obliged to return before they had reached their homes. It is true that he immediately stipulated that we should not overdramatize the situation which has arisen between the executive and legislative powers: Such contradictions are a common matter in civilized society. I should like to agree with him but in our country there is no stable situation and far from all sides want to observe strictly democratic rules of play.

In addition the reforms which are being carried out in the country are of an antipopular nature, largely imposed from outside, and destroy the state. Let us recall that the first adverse response to the liberal reforms initiated by Gaydar was manifested at the sixth Congress of People's Deputies. But at the time the correlation of political forces was obviously not in the opposition's favor. Indeed the very behavior of the opposition at the time was of a blatantly inconsistent nature.

With the course of the implementation of reforms and their adverse consequences there was an increase in opposition to Gaydar's course, reflected at the seventh congress, when Gaydar was obliged to resign. The correlation of forces between the president and the opposition has become approximately equal, which was enshrined by the relevant agreement on stabilization adopted in violation of the Constitution. The Eighth Congress repealed it, thus demonstrating its adherence to the Constitution and complete rejection of the course of reforms in the form in which they are proceeding.

Essentially the struggle at the congress merely displayed a deeper reason for the political struggle in society: the social struggle of the 10 percent of the population which has grown rich from the reforms and the remaining majority which has suffered from them. This underlying conflict could be seen not only in the Kremlin: It was manifested on the approaches to the Kremlin, where two groups of participants in meetings confronted each other, one carrying portraits of Yeltsin and tricolor flags and the other brandishing red flags and demanding the president's resignation.

What can be expected in the future from this keen political struggle under way in society? In answering this question we should bear in mind that the people's economic position will not improve if the former course of reforms is continued. That will force the president either to toughen the political situation in the country or to make compromises: to begin a series of "roundtables" and talks with the opposition and possibly to agree to the formation of a coalition government.

Indeed, it is not ruled out that there will be a different, directly opposite decision: the introduction of a state of emergency in the country, the dissolution of parliament, and so forth. That is the direction in which the president is being pushed by radicals from "Democratic Russia" and some Western circles. Incidentally, yesterday rumors were circulating round Moscow that a state of emergency would be introduced today...

Let us hope that the president has enough sense to avoid aggravating the confrontation in society and to confirm in practice the words he spoke at the congress about consensus, the search for compromise, and love of peace.

Congress Gives 'More Confidence' for Future

PM1603151193 Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 16 Mar 93 First Edition pp 1-2

[Andrey Sharapov "Commentary": "The People Themselves Start Being Concerned for the Good of the People"]

[Text] The last congress represents a smooth transition to a qualitatively new situation for the country.

On the overall philosophical level, the basic idea which, according to a universally held and enduring illusion, underlies the Russian mentality and Russian statehood, has cracked. Personal one-man rule by a monarch, general secretary, or president has turned out to be inadequate in the actual conditions of reforming a modern society. Assurances from the time of the chronicler Nestor right up to Solzhenitsyn stating that Russia has always yearned for a strong ruler have always implied, albeit in parentheses, that Russia is peopled by slaves who cannot imagine themselves in anything but a stick and carrot situation. The congress may have been a surprise for both Russia and the world, and for its own part it demonstrated that the self-preservation instinct of an internally free people is not tightly bound to the princely-monarchical tradition, even if this is 1,000 years old.

On the economic level a sensible and logical move toward common sense has occurred, a move which, unfortunately, is still being rejected by confused politicized consciousness. Reformers, like sappers, are allowed only one mistake. The Gaydar path did not lead society out of the minefield; it left it wounded somewhere one-third of the way along that path.

The congress took certain steps to modernize the reforms mechanism by strengthening the government and at the same time blocking the possibility of certain types of political and economic improvisation. For practically the first time in our history, the people's government, and not one particular official or officialdom, became the guarantor of stability.

On the political level the issue of the form of Russian statehood in democratic conditions has appeared. The issue of the authorities' powers merely lay on the surface of the congress debates, concealing beneath this transparent film the profundity of the problem being discussed. It was hard in a logical sense to square the modest results of the president's recent emergency powers and his statement on the narrowness of the current economic room for maneuver with assurances of the need for new powers to make the reforms succeed. The president's side should at least have foreseen the natural psychological reaction to such strivings. The president's side was bound to propose another game or at least change its trump cards rather than conceal its impotent economic policy with words about the sacred struggle against the CPSU, the Union center, and now the Russian parliament and congress....

The image of the hero warrior fades much faster than the image of the constructive builder. Therefore the president's "defeat" at the Congress was predictable and quite logical, as was the fact that the president (and on this point one cannot fail to agree with Constitutional Court Chairman Valeriy Zorkin) actually scored a clear victory at the congress: While he in fact experienced several psychologically uncomfortable moments and lost (in theory) the chance to indulge in certain unprincipled political maneuvers, he has won something incomparably bigger—a Russia which firmly understands the need to live according to a Constitution and the rule of law. On this basis we can lead Russia to a new kind of statehood with much more confidence than before.

However, which form of government is technically the best for the country today during the complex period of reforms? The heated debate has gotten tangled up in terminology that has bogged down the essence of the issue. In **presidential republics,** it is well known, the president is head of state and government, but does not have the right to dissolve parliament. The "different features" of this form of statehood are determined by the role of the highest representative organ. In **parliamentary republics** power in its entirety belongs to parliament, which forms the government. The president has no significant powers, but he can dissolve parliament in certain circumstances, and occasionally parliament simply has to be dissolved in the event of a vote of no confidence in the government. The FRG, Italy, Austria, Switzerland, India, and a number of other countries are habitually called parliamentary republics. Finally, there exists a mixed, **presidential-parliamentary form of government**—for example in Finland, Ireland, and the so-called Fifth Republic in France. Here the president forms the government, which is also responsible to parliament.

Thus behind every term there is an individual historical "thrashing out" of the main questions of the separation of powers. We are only at the start of this road.

Life itself must provide the answers to the main questions; there is no point in forcing life into yet another scheme which has been successfully employed somewhere overseas.

Most of all, the real fruits of freedom, for example the fact that we are beginning to renounce blind faith in one personality and abandon our reliance on the sanctity of a higher will, that we are gradually learning to deal with real life without the benefit of intermediaries, on a face-to-face basis, inspires hope that a form of Russian statehood will be found, provided the contents—individual freedom combined with Russian national interests—are preserved and developed.

Political Issues

Yeltsin Names Bank Chairman, Other Officials to Cabinet

LD1603222193 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1946 GMT 16 Mar 93

[Text] Moscow, 16 Mar (ITAR-TASS)—Russian Federation President Boris Yeltsin today signed a decree on expanding the membership of the Council of Ministers in accordance with the decision of the Eighth Congress of People's Deputies. According to the president's press

service, the following have been included in the government: V. Gerashchenko, chairman of the Central Bank of the Russian Federation; F. Tabeyev, chairman of the Russian Federal Property Fund; P. Gushvin, chairman of the State Committee for Statistics; and A. Kurtin, chairman of the Board of the Pension Fund of the Russian Federation. Also, by a different presidential decree, V.Gerashchenko was included in the Presidium of the Council of Ministers.

Signs Decree To Expand Council

LD1603230393 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 2045 GMT 16 Mar 93

[Text] Moscow March 16 TASS—Russian President Boris Yeltsin today signed a decree to extend the composition of the Council of Ministers in line with the resolution by the Eighth Congress of People's Deputies.

The president's press service reports that the following persons were included in the government: V. Geraschenko, chairman of the Russian Central Bank, F. Tabeyev, chairman of the Russian Federal Property Fund, P. Guvzhin, chairman of the State Committee for Statistics and A. Kurtin, chairman of the Russian Pension Fund's board.

By another presidential decree V. Geraschenko was included in the Council of Ministers Presidium.

Miners Remain on Strike Alert; Vorkuta Mine Official Slain

OW1603180793 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1711 GMT 16 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] The chairman of the Independent Miners' Union of Russia, Aleksandr Sergeyev, told INTERFAX on Tuesday [16 March] that the coal mines of the Kuznetsk Basin and Vorkuta would remain in a state of strike alert until the Russian parliament and government satisfied all the demands put forward by the union.

He said the union and government had already signed a tariff agreement for 1993 and agreed on all the basic points concerning the creation of a social security fund, but the government had still not signed a protocol on satisfying the miners' demands. The document, Sergeyev said, was currently being considered by the Finance Ministry. The government expected to finish work on it by mid- April, he said.

He said the Supreme Soviet had not yet responded to the union's demand for new legislation on taxation in the coal industry, and for laws on the rights of the individual and on social security.

On Wednesday, Sergeyev said, union representatives would be holding meetings in Vorkuta and Prokopyevsk, the Kuznetsk Basin, discussing the extent to which the miners' demands had been satisfied. Sergeyev himself is leaving for the Kuznetsk Basin on Tuesday.

Vorkuta Miners Demand Convocation of City Council Session

The Independent Miners' Union of Vorkuta and the City Workers' Committee have demanded urgent convocation of a session of the City Council in connection with the brutal murder of a department head at the Vorgashorskaya mine, Vladimir Shubin, and his family in the village of Vorgashor a few days ago.

The union and committee demand that the City Council consider effective measures to fight crime and declare Vorkuta a closed city. Such a session may be attended by officials from the security and interior ministries of Russia and the Komi Republic.

The union and committee have also demanded that, on the day the Shubin family are buried, the Vorkuta administration close all enterprises in the city between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m.

Military Issues

Grachev: Army True to Law, Loyal to Economic Reforms

LD1703115693 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1149 GMT 17 Mar 93

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Andrey Naryshkin]

[Text] Moscow March 17 TASS—"The Army is true to the Constitution and the laws adopted and approved in 1992-1993", Russian Defence Minister Army General Pavel Grachev told journalists today.

Asked if the Army supported democratic and economic reforms he said that "the situation stabilised considerably in the past two months as a result of improvements in social insurance and the increase of money upkeep 2.7 times".

Grachev said that "no more loud protests" were heard among the servicemen, as "we succeeded in convincing the personnel that the difficulties we are experiencing are temporary in character and these difficulties have to be overcome not only by the Defence Ministry but also by themselves", Grachev said.

The minister refused to reply to a question about the danger of restoration of communism in Russia. "If you approached me in the government, I would reply, but in the building of the Defence Ministry I will not respond because I have reiterated many times that the Army is outside politics", General Grachev said.

Says Army Subordinate to Constitution

OW1703113793 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1116 GMT 17 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] On Wednesday [17 March] during his meeting with journalists the Russian Defense Minister Pavel Grachev declared that the army is subordinate only to the Constitution. He voiced this statement on the eve of his meeting with the Finnish Defense Minister Elisabeth Rehn who came to Moscow on a working visit on the invitation of the Russian military department.

Pavel Grachev pointed out that the situation in the Russian armed forces has stabilized after the Ministry has raised the monetary allowances to the servicemen by 2,7 times since this January. According to Grachev, there is no more "loud statements about dissatisfaction" and the servicemen understand that they are experiencing interim difficulties which can be overcome by the joint efforts of the Defense Ministry and the regional leadership. "The army has been and is outside the policy," Grachev emphasized once more.

Speaking about the prospects of the Russian-Finnish cooperation during his negotiations with Elisabeth Rehn, Grachev pointed out that this cooperation is being implemented "simultaneously with the improving of Russia's relations with the European countries." He mentioned good contacts established between the Russian Defense Ministry and military departments of Norway, Denmark, France, Great Britain, Spain, and Germany.

Grachev reported that on March 28 he intends to take part and to speak at the session of the North Atlantic alliance in Brussels on the invitation of NATO general secretary Manfred Werner.

"We are developing our new military policy and implementing reforms in the armed forces basing on today's good neighboring relations," said Grachev. He reported to Rehn about Russia's military doctrine, about measures undertaken by Russia at the Finnish-Russian border, about withdrawal of the Russian forces from the Baltic states, on Russia' approach towards NATO's role in Europe, and on the development of cooperation between Russia and NATO.

Defense Ministry Board Reviews START I Implementation

OW1603202793 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1943 GMT 16 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] The Russian Defense Ministry Board discussed at its Tuesday [16 March] session a number of urgent issues, in particular, preparedness of the armed services to implement the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty, START-1. The agenda also included improvement of the performance and new objectives of military news media in the context of a reduced military budget and increasing printing costs. A decision was made to reform and reduce the number of periodicals.

Defense Official on Tank Industry, Armaments Program

LD1603235993 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1700 GMT 16 Mar 93

[Report by ITAR-TASS correspondent Aleksey Zavinovskiy]

[Text] St. Petersburg, 16 Mar—We have a very good basis for the development of the Russian tank industry. There is also some lagging behind foreign equivalents in a number of parameters, but this lagging behind is not, I think, critical, Andrey Kokoshin, Russian first deputy defense minister, declared in an interview with an ITAR-TASS correspondent.

We have almost formulated part of the armaments program up to the year 2000 and beyond. We have adapted to the new economic conditions, and vital decisions connected with the prospects for the development of the tank industry were outlined today, Andrey Kokoshin stressed.

The first deputy defense minister conducted a conference in the main institute for the design of tanks and tank armaments on the prospects for the development of armor technology. The conference was attended by Colonel General S.Seleznev, commander of the troops in the Leningrad military district; Colonel General A. Galkin, chief of the main armour administration; A.Sitnov, chief of the main missile and artillery administration; and leaders of factories in the sector, scientists and designers.

Andrey Kokoshin left for Moscow today.

Economic Issues

Fedorov Interviewed on Congress, Economic Situation

LD1603150893 Moscow Russian Television Network in Russian 1900 GMT 15 Mar 93

[Studio interview with Deputy Prime Minister Boris Fedorov with domestic correspondents, moderated by announcers Sergey Torchinskiy and Tatyana Krasnova, on the "Without Retouching" program; date not given—live or recorded]

[Excerpts] [passage omitted] [Gurevich] Vladimir Gurevich of MOSCOW NEWS. [passage omitted] The congress has finished. You spent some time at the congress and you had to leave, but you are well aware of all the upheavals and results. It is not your view of the congress itself that I want to hear. What I am wondering is what kind of influence it can have, or has already had,

on what the Russian Government is apt to, or will be able to do. [passage omitted]

[Fedorov] [passage omitted] The days when I was at the congress myself, and what I have learned about the last day—I spoke to many government members, naturally—make me think that the things that were said at the congress about the economic policy, those rather rude attacks against the government at the congress, testify to the fact that the course of reform is under threat, no doubt.

The divergence of views is very evident. It is also very clear that a buildup against very specific elements of the economic program is under way, first and foremost privatization. The question of financial stabilization—will there be a shift? That is still a question mark.

On the other hand, I believe the prime minister's address to the congress—a very powerful political statement—has forced many deputies to think about what the government represents today, whether it can work with its hands tied. It is absolutely clear that it's pretty pointless to fight inflation in the absence of a policy coordinated with the Central Bank, as this accounts for over half of all policy in this area.

By the same token, we cannot carry out a healthy economic policy if we are unaware of what is happening to hundreds of billions of rubles of pension fund money. We cannot pursue this policy without access to some other institutions, or having no normal statistics. There is not a single deputy who knows the actual state of affairs, in a big way. I am not saying that I know the actual state of affairs, but the attempts that I have made in the past two months show that our financial, hard currency, and other situations are much more difficult than one would assume.

The shift of consciousness that has taken place gives us a chance to believe that progress is possible. As I understand it, it was laid down at the congress that the chairman of the Central Bank may be a member [of the Council of Ministers]. This may be looks rather dubious to me, and it will be clear within the next few days whether he may or may not be and what this means, or this will be yet another antireform voice in the government. Time will tell.

On the other hand, I am very seriously concerned indeed that a decision was made on the possibility of suspending or rescinding presidential decrees, etc. If a wave of such suspensions, etc. starts, it will mean the end of the reform.

No negative changes have taken place in the government's work so far; there is a chance to progress. On the other hand, the events that took place during the congress jeopardize, in my view, the whole process of reforms.

[Leontyev] Mikhail Leontyev, SEGODNYA. As far as I remember, Boris Grigoryevich, you have been a candidate for the post of Central Bank chairman for a long time, in fact, since the beginning of the reforms. I would like to ask you now: If you could, would you change your position as deputy prime minister for the post of Central Bank chairman? And if so, would you then try to subordinate the Central Bank to the government?

[Fedorov] The question of independence for the Central Bank—let me start at the end—is determined by the theory of what a central bank is and what it does in different countries. Practice shows that the more independent a central bank—a normal central bank in which people are, and are not pretending to be, central bankers—in those countries inflation is lower and the level of economic development is higher as a rule. [passage omitted] Therefore, I personally have always stood for the independence of the Central Bank. [passage omitted]

The question on which post I would or would not like to hold will depend of course on the people in the government and whether I am indispensable to the government. If I worked at the Central Bank, I do not think I would try to subordinate it to the government; that question simply would not come up.

[Berger] Mikhail Berger from IZVESTIYA. [passage omitted] The question is this: First, is the Russian Government planning to fulfill the commitments of the USSR Government? Second, do you feel responsible for what may happen in the sphere of obligations toward citizens? Will you intervene in this process of collection of money, which seems to me to be uncontrolled and which may tangibly undermine people's trust in financial instruments, etc.? If so, how? Will you intervene administratively or somehow economically? Thank you.

[Fedorov] [passage omitted] Regarding state obligations, I personally have always been against them. [passage omitted] There was the case in 1990 with the Harvest-90 checks, when hysteria was raised around this question. I personally voted at the government session against this question, along with the minister of justice, my namesake. All the others were in favor.

Now I am being asked the question of how we are going to settle up, although you should ask that of Ivan Stepanovich Silayev, Kulik, and the many other people who took part in that business, pushed it, and now for some reason do not talk about it. The problem is really a difficult one. I think that the state has no right to give up its obligations if it is a normal state. [passage omitted] It is another matter to what extent it is possible to really fulfill all these obligations; people are starting to make claims and it is impossible to fulfill them in the form in which they might want them. [passage omitted]

In a number of cases, decisions have been made and payments are continuing and some goods are being collected this year. In principle, it is all at rock bottom and it cannot all be covered with goods. It is just not

reasonable for the state to conjure up 200,000 or 300,000 cars suddenly just like that, today or tomorrow.

I do not think it is quite fair for people who have these checks, for example, or other kinds, to be in a better position than others who entrusted theirs to the State Savings Bank at some time. It was not specified in the conditions of deposit that yours would be indexed or anything like that. It is clear that no one will pay people full indexation from inflation—well, only 30 trillion rubles [R] to date—two annual budgets. That is without calculating the rise in prices and so on. There is not enough money. [passage omitted]

Therefore, repayments will be made to the extent possible. We will propose some kind of indexation but it is practically impossible to pay it all in a moment. But we will try to do the maximum possible.

The most important thing is that interest rates on deposits should at last be reaching market level, more or less. We have taken measures. I have fought for two months with the Central Bank and at last managed to raise these rates. [passage omitted]

If it is not advantageous to keep money in the bank, there will be no savings. If there are no savings, there will be no investments. It is a simple logic; you do not have to be an economist or a journalist or a banker to understand it all. Unfortunately we have many academicians who do not understand it and central bankers who do not understand it. In this sense, there is a specific task from this moment: If inflation is not beaten, you can forget all the talk about investment, savings, and standard of living. It is in this that I see my task to date.

[Lopatenko] Leonid Lopatenko, DELOVOY MIR. [passage omitted] As we know, Estonia has in fact stopped its inflation and it even has a rather stable currency now. [passage omitted] In Estonia, natural resources are scarce; they can't be compared with ours. I am not asking you why; this would take us too far. But the government and you personally, are you studying this front-ranking experience, as one would have said in the old times?

[Fedorov] [passage omitted] In Estonia and Latvia, monetarist ideas and ideas on financial stabilization have been adopted by the leadership at the top level. Necessary steps have been taken accordingly. This has brought about the monetary stabilization. It was difficult, no doubt, but now there is a chance of moving forward. They did it in various ways. In Estonia, in fact, it is not the Central Bank which has achieved this; it was all geared to foreign currency, to reserves. Maybe small Estonia is easier to manage than big Russia.

On the other hand there is Ukraine. They did what our Central Bank preaches—remember last year's compromises: indexing funds in circulation and other things. Their decline in production is only half of ours. Their shops, however, have two or three times fewer goods than ours. They are in total crisis and no one knows what will happen to them next. [passage omitted]

It is quite clear what must be done, but we are forced to argue with the Central Bank and many others. For example, take the bank rate. It is very high—83 percent. The average rate on the market is 50, whereas here it's 80. It is clear that all these rates are being subsidized. By what? By the emission of banknotes, as usual. [passage omitted]

Some say that investment must be encouraged at any cost. [passage omitted] Some want to twist arms at the Savings Bank to force it to issue long-term credits, or to restore some special banks, or—even better—dig into the budget. We can continue to play these games, pretend that we are stimulating investment. You understand, however, that inflation acts the same as a tax. We have robbed the people; take this for a fact. Look at the structure of money in circulation. Some years ago we were talking about the cash residue of savings and other things. That's gone.

Maybe 5 percent of all the money in circulation belongs to the people. The rest is at enterprises. So who suffers the most from our inflation tax? Enterprises. The more we suffocate them with inflation, the more working capital they will require. [passage omitted] A market economy is impossible without money, whatever formulas one would invent: money-goods-money, or tailcoats, or axes. Nevertheless, it all boils down to money. If money does not work, the economy won't work. [passage omitted]

All attempts to pursue an economic policy which is based on nonmonetarist ideology are absurd. They go against the people and the national interests of the state. [passage omitted] The question now is either we roll down even further and take a long time for our experiments with the long-suffering motherland, or we move forward toward a healthy economy.

Of course, our political situation complicates this progress. We have congresses all the time, discussions, and every deputy believes he has the right to intervene. Some demanded at the congress: Give us a hard currency budget! There is no hard currency budget in a country where the market rate is dominant in everything. It won't appear because it can't appear. We can make something up, of course, scribble things and present them. But there can't be a hard currency budget in a normal country. [passage omitted]

Yavlinskiy had to go, at some point. I had to. Gaydar was forced to. Then what? Does anyone have a specific alternative? A socially orientated economy? How are you going to orientate it socially if you've got no cash? Again, the right hand gives people R10 and the left takes 20 back? We already have R10,000 banknotes. We'll soon have R100,000 bills, with these policies. This is an ideological question: What kind of country do we live in and where are we going?

[EKONOMIKA I ZHIZN correspondent] Boris Grigoryevich, you have just said that the Central Bank, some

funds, and the State Committee for Statistics are subordinate to the Supreme Soviet. But these problems already existed last year. Toward the end of last year, however, the government gave some rather optimistic assurances that 1993 should be a turning point in the process of stabilizing the economy. Do you share this optimism today, and if you do, what is it based on?

[Fedorov] First of all, I never made any statements about a turning point, stabilization, or any such thing, and have no intention of making them. You can only make promises when you are authorized to do so and when there are some specific projects being implemented. I can only say that if we do this and that, we will get such and such a result. [passage omitted]

I was surprised to discover that no one in the whole country had a specific and full picture of the financial situation. I do not know how the government made statements about the stabilization or nonstabilization of the economy, but after talking to three vice chairmen of the Central Bank, the economics minister, and people from the Finance Ministry, it became clear to me that each of them knew their own particular bit but none of them could bring them together. Economic policy requires that you possess the full picture. [passage omitted]

Nevertheless, all measures are quite well known and quite specific. They are very difficult to implement because the work of most ministries and departments is still based on the principle give us things, and each individual minister is basically unconcerned with the financial situation of the state as a whole. He is concerned only about how much his own branch will get. I often think that each of those individual ministers is a lobbyist acting for his own industry, not a statesman responsible for his country. [passage omitted]

No reform can be reached through consensus, by parliament voting or things like that. You put your trust in a particular government, a prime minister, or a president and they fulfill the task and are responsible for it. You cannot put every single step to a vote. [passage omitted] Therefore, we must use the chance we have today and go the whole way, because in the political situation which exists today it is quite possible that we will get five years or so of rest, so to speak, while someone else conducts his own experiments.

[Krasnova] Thank you. Now it's the turn of Nikolay Gurov of ROSSIYSKIYE VESTI, followed by Radio Liberty.

[Gurov] Boris Grigoryevich, it is exactly three months since the Chernomyrdin government began its work. I realize that this is not long enough for us to be able to make a deep analysis. Nevertheless, if you had to take stock, what would you say the government can count as achievements? What changed with the departure of Gaydar and the arrival of Chernomyrdin?

[Fedorov] It is the prime minister who has completed three months.

[Gurov] Yes.

[Fedorov] The government was not appointed until 23 December, so that is not yet three months.

It might appear that we have not achieved all that much. But in the first place, there has been no return to the past. Everybody would agree that there has been no return to the past. In general there has been no retreat. There were some attempts to do so. There was the fairly unpleasant business with the changes which were called for. Nevertheless, we held the line.

The program which was outlined, and which led to some argument within the government, is in my view fairly progressive, fairly balanced. Moreover, it has been adopted. Again, it may not have pleased everybody. It could have been more radical perhaps, more considered. But don't forget that we had very little time and that there was an inherited way of doing things. A person finds himself suddenly thrust into the post of deputy chairman. In the old days, I don't think he was supposed to think for himself. This is what I discovered. That was the way things were organized. There were not even any filing cabinets. He was not even supposed to keep papers. If a memo arrived, he would scribble Attention Sidorov or something similar and pass it on, leaving himself with an empty desk.

Every day there is a crowd of visitors, people asking for 1 billion, 3 billion, 10 billion. Some even ask for trillions, and tell you they need it urgently! In such a situation, when you receive this flow of paper from morning to night, it is extremely difficult to think about policy. Nevertheless, I think we have managed to outline this policy, to draw up the plan of action which was endorsed. I personally insisted that almost every week we should check to see which points in the plan have not yet been implemented. Each week I compile a list of actions which have to be taken, even if they are not part of the plan, and submit them to the prime minister.

Today, for instance, I wrote a letter about this finance corporation we are setting up. The president has signed a decree, as you know. In my letter I said this process should be speeded up because the Finance Ministry ought not to be responsible for the distribution of credit. This is not the Finance Ministry's business. But a system has grown up under which credit transactions have to be handled by the Finance Ministry or the Central Bank. It is quite obvious that the Central Bank should not be responsible for providing finance or credit to the economy. Its job should be the refinancing of banks, the regulation of liquidity. But who will do this if the Central Bank and the Ministry of Finance do not? So, this organization will be set up.

Then there are other matters. There was the decision on the currency market and currency control. It took two months to prepare this decision. It was an interesting

process. There was no end of drafts. It had to be cleared with dozens of departments. Therefore, it was a fairly agonizing process. Often we had to apply fairly unparliamentary methods, to exert pressure, to persuade people to get a move on. The whole machinery of state power is built in such a way that speedy decisions do not get made. The machinery, the apparatus, was not designed for rapid decisions. Nevertheless, this decision was reached.

A whole series of other decisions are now in preparation. One such decision concerns loans to CIS countries. This is one of the biggest problems I have had to face recently. In trying to work out where our inflation is coming from, I came across the question of loans to the CIS. It transpires that since 1 July last year, R2 trillion of so-called technical credit has been issued. Of this sum, R500 billion was pure cash—in other words, bank notes were given as credit. They were loaded into railroad trucks and dispatched. How did this happen? To what extent was this connected with Russia's needs? In my view, there was absolutely no control over a large part of this process, which benefited neither Russia nor other countries. In practice, Russia simply continued the automatic financing of cash flows which existed in the past.

When I see a demand for payment coming in from Ukraine, covering a transaction between one cooperative and another over some service or other, I ask myself why we have to cover these services by issuing more money into circulation? Let them earn their rubles here and then make the payment there themselves. There's nothing wrong with that. Ukraine is now a foreign state. It has its own currency—of a sort. The same applies to many other countries. Why does every citizen of Turkmenistan have to receive what amounts to a free subsidy of R35,000? Why was there no repayment date for this technical credit, and no interest charged on it? Why was there no collateral? This question has arisen. I myself immediately asked the Central Bank not to give any further credit of this sort during March. If they do, they must of course take full responsibility for it themselves.

I cannot bear responsibility for payments from one cooperative to another, funded out of the money supply, at a cost to our inflation rate. This accounts for roughly a quarter of all our inflation. Some 25 percent of all loans issued in our country, including bank notes, have gone in practice to CIS countries. It is not at all obvious that we derived any benefit from this. Add it all up, at any exchange rate, and it comes to billions of dollars. Furthermore, they are still buying our hydrocarbons and other goods at domestic prices. So, I'm not at all sure that we can talk about stabilization if we have these black holes.

A draft presidential decree has now been prepared. I have been away for two days but I hope it has made a bit of progress in that time. In other words, the question must be sorted out. Let parliament set some specific ceiling for the year. I do not think it should be R2 trillion. It must be much less.

There is no need, in my view, to keep pretending that there is a ruble zone, because in practice it has ceased to exist. There cannot be a ruble zone without clear-cut rules of behavior for component parts of the zone. How can this be a zone, at the end of the day, if some people subsidize their enterprises and index working capital, while others carry out a policy of austerity? How can it operate? And there are a whole series of other things being discussed at the moment.

In my view, this is extremely little. Personally, I am not satisfied with these achievements. Personnel changes are going extremely slowly. When candidates are nominated, it takes a very long time to consider them. I hope this process will be speeded up. At all events I will be insisting that things which can be done, are done.

[Sergey Sinyavskiy, Radio Liberty] Boris Grigoryevich, you are one of those at the helm of Russia's reforms. When you became a deputy prime minister in the Russian Government, you retained your post as a World Bank director representing Russia. Your statements made in the past two or two and a half months testify to the fact that you advocate a harsh and uncompromising course, particularly with regard to relations with the Central Bank. Many people have formed the impression that you act as someone who has something to fall back on. What would you answer to those skeptics who believe that deep down you regard your deputy prime minister's post as a kind of medium-term commission away from London?

[Fedorov] First of all, not London but Washington.

[Sinyavskiy] Yes indeed, from Washington, sorry about that.

[Fedorov] As far as falling back is concerned, it is a traditional Russian habit to look into other man's pockets and all that. On this point I can guarantee that I would not work at the World Bank if it became necessary to leave, and so on. I have sufficient professional qualifications to be able to find a job within a week at some top bank, or top company, and so on. In this respect I feel quite confident; I do not believe I would be dependent on the World Bank, or any other bank.

I think everyone entering the government should first of all think not about what he gets from the government, but about what he has to do there. He should not worry about being thrown out. When I left last time, I had nothing to fall back on. And yet I left. I was thrown out of the state dacha, I was stripped of my car that very day, so that I could not even leave the place for quite a while. I was unemployed for three months. I am not at all afraid of this. Thank God, we live in a free country now, so hopefully I will not be sent to jail, and I will certainly find a job.

The private sector, as you know, has already been set up, and it is developing quite successfully. Therefore my position is this: We do not intend to slam the door, we do not hope, rather I personally do not hope, that if, God

forbid, something happens now, we would slip away or something. No, we will stay here, we will look our adversaries straight in the eye, and we will fight to the end.

The arrangement by which I retained my director's post was agreed with the president. The fact is that my children have already started school, so it is necessary for them to continue. I really wanted them to complete at least another term there. Therefore, I do not think it is a fundamental issue that should be of interest to everyone.

On the other hand, while I remain a director, I am actually involved with the projects the bank has organized here. It is common knowledge that there are huge problems. Many projects, not just of the World Bank, but of a whole range of other potential major creditors, are under threat. Billions of dollars that can come to Russia are not coming because the reception system is so poorly organized.

Strange as it may seem, it turns out that many people here do not need this money. Missions from foreign banks, such as the U.S. Export-Import Bank, Japanese banks, or the European Bank, apply to all possible quarters, and are waved away like flies, or these meetings are regarded as just another routine matter to forget about as soon as it ends. But someone has to prepare drafts!

But here we are used to simpler procedures: You come to the government, as it were, a crumpled slip of paper in hand, asking for a billion, and you get it immediately. No need to develop business plans, to make calculations, to consider different options and so on.

I see my task as contributing to arranging this cooperation. I spend quite a lot of time on this. I try to organize things so that various other departments and organizations finally get involved in this. At present, while we lack money for investments—I have already mentioned that there will be no ruble investments, because of our budget and so on—but if there is a possibility of receiving up to 10 billion, if we tot up all potential possibilities, as money for investments... [incomplete sentence as heard]

The World Bank grants the money for 17 years, with a significant preferential terms period, with an interest rate that is not too high. So why not accept this investment money? After all, nobody is going to give us long-term credits, as you know. The 12 billion that Russia received from previous credit lines was short-term money, to be paid off after just one year. For us, it could have been a significant tool in developing investment. My task, as I see it, is to ensure that we can use this factor. [passage omitted]

[Correspondent Ilya Kopelevich, Russia's Radio News Service] Boris Grigoryevich, the government headed by Gaydar last year had been hoping that privatization would somehow reduce the pro-inflation pressure of the managers of enterprises. But last year, the privatized enterprises demanded—and, justifiably, obviously—credits to the same extent that state enterprises were receiving them. What will the government attempt to do in order to change the bureaucratic psychology in Russia?

[Fedorov] Well, the most essential thing is that everyone should stop regarding the state and the government as a milch cow. And to this end, those who are not deserving should simply not be given anything. To this end, there should be very strict criteria, very harsh priorities. To this end, there should be government institutions, say, the Russian finance corporation that is now being set up, which will work with these enterprises. Indeed, where the state is capable of receiving a great return by investing state funds, this needs to be done, but in precise conditions: what is given, when, for what purpose.

Another aspect is that last year, despite all talk about the market, etc., how many enterprises were closed, how many went bankrupt, how many people were really fired, etc.? However unpleasant this is, and no one wants to call for this, but there can really be no structural perestroyka of the economy without the loss of the part of the industry that is inefficient and that has no prospects. And, whether we like it or not, this needs to be done. It is better to do this in a civilized fashion with social protection measures, making calculations, even investing money in the closure of some mines, for instance. You cannot close the gates and drive out anyone just like that. But, without sufficiently harsh actions in this sphere, there will not be a shift. There will be these very same payments, because everyone knows: well, even I have not paid, so what, can they really do anything to me: no one can fire anyone and no one can close any enterprises. There cannot be any market economies in which such a situation exists. If you haven't paid someone, you should come under the hammer, whether you like it or not.

After all, the time is past when, so to speak, everything could be paid with state funds—these state funds simply are no longer there now. These are the key factors which need to be implemented. On the other hand, where state ownership remains, in my view, there should be far stricter state management. And in this sense, amendments should be introduced into the law on enterprises, inasmuch as having state property and not having the possibility of running it, is also a nonsense, from the point of view of any state.

[BIZNESS MOSKOVSKIYA NOVOSTI correspondent] Boris Grigoryevich, three options for your personal political career seem to me to be possible today. The first is that you retain your status as a deputy prime minister, but formally will only be in charge of economic policy. [passage omitted] The second option is that of Gaydar who, after all the concessions he made, left with an image of a weak-willed politician and anyway those concessions did not help him to save his political career. The third option is what you have been telling us and what seems to be the least probable—that you succeed in persuading

the parliament, the Central Bank, and so on and everyone starts to produce normal, good quality currency. What assessment do you make of these three options?

[Fedorov] The first is flatly unacceptable for me—this is not in my character, I am not going to be anyone's puppet. I think some mixture of the second and third option is the most probable. It's hard to tell which will predominate, the second or the third. But I personally have no pretence to any political career, I am interested in concrete economic issues—at least at this stage. [passage omitted]

[Krasnova] Boris Grigoryevich, what seems to you the most frightening thing in our life, as a private individual and a father of two, as well as a deputy prime minister?

[Fedorov] Very many things frighten me from a purely human point of view. For example, that dirt is settling everywhere, that people are becoming increasingly rude, that there is no faith in the future, that the younger generation is often deeply cynical and does not care about the fate of the country. All this is frightening, and I think that our task—the government's first of all—is to give some hope to the people.

Regional Affairs

North Ossetia-Ingushetia Situation 'Remains Complex'

LD1603130593 Moscow Programma Radio Odin Network in Russian 1200 GMT 16 Mar 93

[Text] The situation in North Ossetia and Ingushetia remains complex, according to reports from the headquarters of the temporary administration. Several exchanges of fire have been noted over the past 48 hours. Russian Interior Ministry search groups are collecting information in North Ossetia and Ingushetia to identify hostages and missing persons.

The North Ossetia Security Council met today in Vladikavkaz. It focused on ways to resolve the situation in Prigorodnyy rayon and discussed issues due for examination at the next plenary session of North Ossetia's and Ingushetia's plenipotentiary delegations in Kislovodsk.

Situation Being Discussed

LD1603232193 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1937 GMT 16 Mar 93

[By ITAR-TASS Correspondent Valeriy Shanayev]

[Text] Vladikavkaz March 16 TASS—The North Ossetian Security Council met in session here today to discuss the state of matters in the region and look for ways of settling the situation in Prigorodnyy district.

The Security Council also addressed issues which are planned to be examined at a regular plenary meeting of plenipotentiary delegations of North Ossetia and Ingushetia with the mediation of representatives of Daghestan and Stavropol territory in Kislovodsk on March 18.

According to the military administration, the situation in North Ossetia and Ingushetia remains serious: checkpoints in the region were shelled on several occasions in the past two days. Luckily, the attacks caused no casualties.

Seven firearms, grenades and over 500 cartridges of various calibres were confiscated from local residents in the area of the armed conflict.

Ingush President Appeals to N. Ossetian Leaders

LD1603230893 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 2009 GMT 16 Mar 93

[By ITAR-TASS special correspondent Mikhail Shevtsov]

[Text] Nazran March 16 TASS— President Ruslan Aushev of the Ingush Republic sent an appeal to the leaders and people of North Ossetia today. It says, in part:

"The establishment of the Ingush statehood coincided with the period when peace and accord typical of the history of our two peoples' relationships appeared to be destroyed. As president of the Ingush Republic I will exert every effort to restore peace between the peoples of Ossetia and Ingushetia and express hope that all disputes between the Ingush Republic and the North Ossetian SSR will eventually be solved through talks, in line with the Russian Constitution and laws."

Chechen Opposition Urges Unity for Democratic Changes

OW1703001093 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1433 GMT 16 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] The Council of national and civil consent in Chechnya addressed the republic's citizens and sociopolitical movements and parties with an appeal "to unite efforts for democratic transformations." The Council's address distributed on Tuesday [16 March] in Groznyy also proposes participating in the March 27 referendum organized on the initiative of the parliament. Issues concerning the form of the republic's future state system (presidential or parliamentary - IF [INTERFAX]) and

the necessity of premature elections to all branches are to be presented at the referendum.

Chechen President Johar Dudayev has vetoed the parliament's decision on the referendum. The parliament addressed Chechnya's Constitutional Court which is to pass a decision on the lawfulness of Dudayev's decree.

The Council of national and civil consent created this February unites parliamentary and other forces opposing the Chechen President. The chairman of the parliamentary commission on foreign affairs, Yusup Soslambekov, who is also head of the parliament of the influential Confederation of Caucasian peoples, has actually headed this Council.

International Affairs

Officials Discuss Strengthening Ties With Iran

LD1603164593 Tehran IRNA in English 1520 GMT 16 Mar 93

[Text] Moscow, March 16, IRNA—Chairman of the Ukrainian Parliament Ivan Plyushch in a meeting with visiting Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister Mahmud Va'ezi in Kiev today called for broadening of Tehran-Kiev cooperation in various grounds, trade and economy in particular.

The Ukrainian nation and government, he said, like the other newly independent republics of the former Soviet Union, consider Iran as a powerful friend in the region and are keen on expansion of bilateral relations.

Va'ezi in return voiced Iran's readiness to promote parliamentary ties as well as economic and commecial cooperation with Kiev.

Underlining the recent agreement to lay pipelines via Ukrainian territory for transfer of Iran's natural gas to Europe, Va'ezi stated that Ukraine could have trust in Iran as a reliable trade partner.

Later in the day Va'ezi met with the Ukraininan First Deputy Prime Minister Igor Yukhnovskiy who is also the chairman of the joint Irano-Ukrainian Economic Commission.

The two officals agreed on the holding the first joint commission in Tehran early next April. They also reached agreements in various fields including oil, gas, mines and banking affairs.

Referring to the decisive role transportation and banking affairs play in promotion of bilateral economic and commercial relations, Va'ezi announced that in the near future a branch of Iran's Sepah Bank will be inagurated in Kiev.

Steps have been taken to have a direct Tehran-Kiev air link in the near future, he added.

Va'ezi pointing to Iran's purchases from Kiev, termed as promising the prospect of bilateral economic and commercial cooperation.

He also stressed the need to install more road facilities by the Ukrainian government.

Leaders Hold Talks

LD1603210993 Kiev Ukrayinske Telebachennya Network in Ukrainian 1700 GMT 16 Mar 93

[Text] A delegation from the Islamic Republic of Iran, headed by Mr. Mahmud Va'ezi, deputy minister of foreign affairs, is on the third day of its official visit to Ukraine.

[Correspondent] The Iranian officials today met Ukraine President Leonid Kravchuk. Issues of the economic and political life of Iran and Ukraine were discussed during the conversation. The president supported the initiative of members of the government delegation from the Islamic Republic of Iran to firm up a plan for further joint action in deepening our economic mutual relations. During the conversation, Mahmud Va'ezi introduced several specific proposals directed at speeding up trading operations between our countries. The sides exchanged opinions regarding the prospects for extending mutual relations in the cultural and diplomatic spheres of the life of both countries.

A meeting between Mahmud Va'ezi and Ukraine Supreme Council Chairman Ivan Plyushch, also took place today. During an exchange of opinions on the present state of Ukrainian-Iranian relations, Mahmud Va'ezi emphasized: The government of the Islamic Republic of Iran is sincerely interested in the stabilization of Ukraine's economy. For Ukraine is a member of the recently established Commonwealth of States of the Black Sea Basin [as heard]. The guest handed over an invitation from the head of the parliament of the Islamic Republic of Iran to Ivan Plyushch to visit his state within the composition of a parliamentary delegation. Ivan Plyushch noted: There are no factors now which would obstruct the development of further Ukrainian-Iranian economic relations. The main aim is that our inter-state contacts should be mutually advantageous.

The delivery of oil products from Iran to Ukraine, and the working out in detail of the technical method of mutual settlements, were the topics of a conversation between Mahmud Va'ezi and Ukraine First Deputy Premier Ihor Yukhnovskyy. In the opinion of the leader of the government delegation of Iran, the main thing now is to define the priority directions of delivery of oil and oil products, and to agree on prices. The Iranian side could already begin delivering oil now, but Ukraine ought to pay $30 million for this.

Commenting on the situation which has arisen, Ihor Yukhnovskyy noted: The technical method of mutual settlements between our states has been determined now. It is necessary for representatives of Iran to outline the range of goods which Ukraine will deliver to their state as payment for oil. No other restrictive factors are in existence. Other issues of mutual interest were (?also) discussed during the meeting.

Rafsanjani Message Given to Kravchuk

LD1703101193 Tehran IRNA in English 0756 GMT 17 Mar 93

[Text] Moscow, March 17, IRNA—The message of the Iranian President Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani was handed over to the Ukrainian President Leonid Kravchuk by visiting Deputy Foreign Minister for Euro-America Mahmud Va'ezi in a meeting here Tuesday [16 March].

During the meeting, Kravchuk laid emphasis on the significance of Iran's role in the region and called for promotion of Tehran-Kiev ties in all domains.

Noting that Kiev is interested in further expansion of ties and cooperation with the Islamic Republic, the Ukrainian president hoped his Iranian counterpart would visit Kiev in a near future.

Expressing pleasure over the beginning of economic cooperation between the two countries, he underlined the need to employ mutual efforts towards consolidation of peace and stability in the region.

The Iranian envoy predicted a positive and constructive prospect for Tehran-Kiev ties.

Meanwhile, Va'ezi held a separate meeting with his Ukrainian counterpart Tarasyuk Tuesday and discussed bilateral relations and the latest regional developments as well as issues related to the Commonwealth of Independent States including the recent events in Russia.

Tarasyuk praised Iran for its efforts carried out towards establishment of peace and tranquility in Afghanistan, Karabakh and Tajikistan.

Referrring to the two countries common viewpoints, he stressed the need to promote bilateral ties and exchange views on mutual, regional and international issues.

Va'ezi reiterated Iran's peace-seeking policy in the region and called for all-out cooperation of all neighboring countries in establishment of peace and stability in the region.

He hoped that the conflicts in the newly-independent former Soviet republics would be solved through peaceful and political means.

Official Briefs Supreme Soviet on Russian Gas Deal

OW1603235693 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1944 GMT 16 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Yuliy Ioffe, Ukrainian vice-premier [for questions of the fuel and energy complex], told a joint session of two standing commissions of the country's Supreme Soviet which deal with the agro-industrial complex that Ukraine has signed agreements with Russia on delivery of about 40 million tons of oil in 1993. About 20 million will be supplied as Ukraine's quotas, 8.8 million through exchange, and 11.2 million will be bought at world prices.

Ioffe said that Ukraine will pay up to 400 Bn [billion] rubles monthly for Russian oil and gas. What troubles him is that Kiev can hardly raise that amount.

He confirmed that 200,000 tons of gasoline and 240,000 tons of diesel fuel, which will cover just over one half of the needs, were in stock for the spring sowing campaign.

The vice-premier's report failed to satisfy deputies representing the agricultural sectors. They said that when the Supreme Soviet discusses the governmental program of economic stabilization and social security on March 17 they will demand immediate resignation of first Vice-Premier Ihor Yukhnovskyy and Vice-Premier [for Questions of Economic Reform] Viktor Pynzenyk.

The deputies accused the vice-premiers of incompetence in agriculture and purposeful subversion of collective- and state-owned farms. The agrarian deputies intend to nominate Vladimir Demyanov, now vice-premier responsible for agricultural matters, for promotion to first vice-premiership.

Agreement Signed With Polish Security Service

LD1603212093 Warsaw PAP in English 2019 GMT 16 Mar 93

[Text] Kiev, March 16—Head of the State Protection Office (UOP) Jerzy Konieczny and head of the Ukrainian security service General Yevhan Marchuk on Tuesday signed a secret agreement on "cooperation and mutual assistance" between secret services of both countries. The ceremony was attended by Polish and Ukrainian Interior Ministers Andrzej Milczanowski and Andriy Vasylyshyn.

Head of the Ukrainian security service press office Anatoliy Sakhno said the agreement provides for the exchange of information concerning terrorist activities, drug-trafficking and international crime. However, information received by either side cannot be made available to the third party.

This agreement is the first one ever signed by Ukraine with a country which does not belong to the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) and it does not provide for opening of both sides missions in Warsaw or Kiev.

Earlier, Minister Milczanowski held talks with members of the Ukrainian Supreme Council committee for combatting organized crime and with his counterpart General Vasylyshyn.

Commenting on the talks, Minister Andrzej Milczanowski said he was optimistic about cooperation between both countries security services and police forces.

On Wednesday, Milczanowski will meet with Ukraine's First Deputy Prime Minister Ihor Yukhnovskyy.

Further on Accord

LD1603220893 Kiev Ukrayinske Telebachennya Network in Ukrainian 1700 GMT 16 Mar 93

[Text] An agreement on cooperation between the State Protection Office of the Republic of Poland and the Security Service of Ukraine was signed in Kiev today. The agreement was signed by Jerzy Konieczny, head of the State Protection Office of the Republic of Poland, and Yevhen Marchuk, chief of the Security Service of

Ukraine. In accordance with the agreement, the sides pledged to jointly campaign against terrorism in its various forms, against organized international crime, in particular in the sphere of illegal economic and financial turnover, against the illegal transfer of weapons, drugs, and radioactive and toxic substances, and against smuggling of cultural and artistic valuables.

National Affairs

'Final Part' of 'Exclusive' Kravchuk Interview

OW1603190193 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1540 GMT 16 Mar 93

[Third and final part of "exclusive" interview with President Leonid Kravchuk by Boris Grishchenko, editor of "Presidential Bulletin"; place and date not given; from the "Presidential Bulletin" feature—item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Q: At the beginning of the interview, you spoke of the common history of Ukraine and Russia. What do you think the near future of their relations will be? What obstacles should be removed to make the Ukrainian-Russian dialogue as normal as possible?

A: It should be clear that Ukraine and Russia have much in common, not only in their historical development, they also have many common problems which should be resolved only on the basis of equality. I think we are going to come to that.

In my opinion attempts to drive the partner into a blind alley by deliberately creating insoluble problems are hindering our neighborliness and understanding.

Q: Could you give concrete examples?

A: Take Sevastopol. One cannot make unilateral declarations that it is a Russian city. Such declarations immediately close the door to solving this complicated matter. In general our countries, I think, should have a very balanced approach to territorial problems, as well as the problem of ethnic minorities.

The five million Ukrainians living in Russia have only two Ukrainian schools. Russians living in our country have many more schools, newspapers and magazines. There is not a single Ukrainian school, day care center or theater in the Crimea where 600,000 Ukrainians live.

Still these problems should not be regarded as insoluble. We need patience and will. Wherever I speak I always emphasize that Russia is a special priority for us.

Q: What do you think of the claim by Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn that Ukraine is pushing Russia away with "short-sighted hatred"? This phrase from the letter of the famous writer to the Russian ambassador in the USA has attracted much attention.

A: I think in this case a highly-intellectual person has been cut off from information. He judges relations between Russia and Ukraine by NEW YORK TIMES reports, and that paper often resorts to lies; that is no exaggeration. I am sure that Solzhenitsyn's claims that Ukraine is "pushing Russia away" are a result of distorted information.

Solzhenitsyn enjoys great authority. Unfortunately, such declarations distort the image of Ukraine. I would not start advising the famous writer, but I do not think it is always reasonable to publicize such declarations without studying or checking them. There are many interpreters of Ukrainian-Russian relations, by the way. We should not hasten to lash out at each other.

Q: What do you think stands in the way of settling the issue of strategic missiles in Ukraine?

A: The same stalemate approach to the matter. We have invited Russia to sign an agreement under which Russia would have the right to technical supervision as the manufacturer of the 130 strategic missiles in Ukraine. We have 46 more missiles but they were assembled by Ukrainian experts together with their Russian colleagues.

Ukraine is pressed to recognize that all strategic missiles on its territory are Russian property. But there is a law passed by our parliament declaring that everything on the territory of the country is Ukrainian property. Russia has similar legislation. Does Ukraine claim the missiles stationed in Tambov region, for example? Laws should not be changed to resolve the problem; new approaches should be sought instead. For example, Ukraine does not claim the full cost of the above-mentioned missiles but only for part of the warhead substance. This approach implies the ultimate dismantling of the missiles.

Q: Can this continuing argument lead to a "missile Chernobyl," the possibility of which is now being spoken of?

A: There is the problem of technical maintenance. But it should not be dramatized. High technologies require top-class experts and big facilities. Therefore one should not believe in absolute safety. However, there is no need to frighten the public.

Recently I had a serious discussion on the subject with Ukrainian experts and scientists. We worked out ways of resolving the problem which we keep a constant eye on.

Q: Is your attitude to the CIS changing?

A: No, it is not. The Commonwealth should go on living without changing its status. I think it should be helpful primarily in the economic integration of member-nations on the basis of usefulness and partnership.

But if it opts for political integration, this will be another blind alley, because the former Soviet republics are not ready for it today and will not be for a long time. Just think by way of comparison how long it took for the treaty of Rome to make its way in Europe. Any attempt to go back to the USSR is wrought with dangerous clashes.

The reaction of CIS countries to Russia's attempt to get a UN mandate for peace-keeping operations in former Soviet territory is indicative of this. In my opinion such declarations should be done only with the consent of all CIS countries. I would consider a summit on the subject a normal way of resolving the matter. However, I learned about the initiative from the media. Can you imagine what countries not belonging to the Commonwealth, say the Baltic states, felt when they learned the news? I am sure that any question, no matter how complicated, can be resolved if a political dialogue is conducted in a civilized and friendly way.

Kravchuk Approves Sevastopol's Special Status

LD1703084893 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 0703 GMT 17 Mar 93

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Roman Zadunaiskiy]

[Text] Moscow March 17 TASS—Ukrainian President Leonid Kravchuk has approved, on the whole, the economic concept, worked out by the Sevastopol city council, under which the city should be given a special legal status, chairman of the Sevastopol city council of people's deputies Viktor Semyonov said on March 16 at a press conference on the results of his meeting with the president of the republic.

Semyonov believes that Sevastopol needs a special status, because the main base of the Black Sea Fleet is situated there and because most of its industrial enterprises are defence-oriented, spokesman for the press centre of the Black Sea Fleet Sergey Ozerov told ITAR-TASS. According to Semyonov, the point at issue is a special status for the whole of the Sevastopol region, which has an area of 96,000 hectares.

The economic conception, submitted to the Ukrainian president, includes the transition to contractual relations with the Ukrainian Defence Ministry and the signing of an agreement between the city council and the Russian Federation on urgent measures for supplying the city with energy resources and developing its infrastructure, which will become part of the treaty between Russia and Ukraine about Sevastopol and about the creation of free enterprise zones in the Sevastopol region.

Parliament Gives New Powers to Heads of Local Councils

OW1603205093 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1945 GMT 16 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] The Ukrainian parliament on Tuesday [16 March] proclaimed the heads of local councils to be the highest officials in the local government hierarchies.

This effectively prevents the President's representatives in regions and major cities from carrying out his policy.

Parliament rejected as insufficiently democratic the draft Law On Stricter Penalties for Certain Crimes Against the State proposed by Prosecutor-General Viktor Shishkin.

The draft gave concrete definitions of what was described as acts posing danger to society—appeals for forcible replacement or destruction of the constitutional system or for the seizure of state power.

Cabinet To Study Construction of Tanker Terminal

LD1603233593 Kiev Ukrayinske Telebachennya Network in Ukrainian 1900 GMT 16 Mar 93

[Excerpts] [Announcer] A landmark decision was adopted today at a session of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine: to produce proposals by 15 April regarding construction of an oil shipment tanker terminal on the Black Sea, and to submit these proposals to parliament for examination and approval.

[Correspondent] Ukraine needs an alternative means of delivering oil by tankers. Everyone at the council, which was chaired by Vice Prime Minister Yuliy Ioffe, agreed with this. It is planned to build the necessary terminal near Odessa, and in accordance with the relevant resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers, the first part should be in operation by 1994. The planners presented 16 volumes of their findings, and requested 833 million karbovantsi and 26 million dollars to bring in a launching complex for 12 million tonnes of oil per year. The opposition, representatives of the environment protection commissions of the Supreme Council and Odessa Oblast Council, expressed doubts as to the ecological expediency of building a terminal. [passage omitted]

Following the outbreak of passions, the constructive proposal of the vice prime minister won—to come to an agreement on all controversial issues within a month and to submit proposals to the Supreme Council for declaring a competition for the best draft, which would take account of all the economic and ecological aspects of the problem, so that, as Yuliy Ioffe said, the tanker terminal not only does not pollute the sea, but it also works to clean up the water.

Belarus

Negotiations With U.S. Firms on Oil Investment Ongoing

LD1603234293 Minsk Radiostantsiya Belarus International Service in Belarusian 1900 GMT 16 Mar 93

[Text] Last year, representatives of large U.S. oil-extracting companies approached the Belarusian Government with a proposal to cooperate. Contacts were made. Oil-prospecting specialists came to Belarus, studied the results of our prospecting, then suggested investing $100,000 in the joint development of oil deposits. They issued an invitation to visit them in order to learn about their capacities. The Belarusian delegation which visited the United States was headed by Vyacheslav Kuznetsov, first deputy chairman of the parliament.

During the negotiations at the end of February, the U.S. firms proposed their draft contract. It envisaged capital investment by them in our prospected deposits including those which are being developed. As for prospecting for new deposits of black gold, the Americans suggested starting it after their expenses had been covered and profits made.

Belarus could not agree to this because our republic is primarily interested in prospecting for and extracting oil in new regions. As a result, the draft contract is still to be worked on by Belarusian experts. As Vyachaslav Kuznetsov noted in an interview for NARODNAYA GAZETA, representatives of the Belarusian delegation have managed to persuade the Americans to invest capital simultaneously both in prospecting and in increasing extraction from the active deposits. An agreement has been reached on parallel investment in these two directions on an equal scale. The technology to be used by the Americans in prospecting and extracting is their business, but they are convinced of success. Vyachaslav Kuznetsov noted that the companies with which the republic is dealing have specialized in oil extraction from layers of difficult accessibility for decades.

However, the interests of the Republic of Belarus in the sphere of oil-extraction lie not in the west but in Russia. We have already been working there for a sufficiently long time and have invested a lot of resources in opening up and developing oil- extracting regions, Vyachaslaw Kuznyatsow concluded. They know us there as the most reliable of partners.

Delegation Visits Lithuania, Signs Trade Accord

WS1703074593 Minsk BELINFORM in Russian 1511 GMT 16 Mar 93

[Text] An official Belarusian delegation headed by Council of Ministers Chairman Vyacheslav Kebich visited Lithuania on 16 March.

At the state border, the Belarusian delegation was met by Lithuanian Minister of Transport Jonas Birziskis. Negotiations between the government delegations of Belarus and Lithuania were held at noon at the Vilnius Government Palace decorated with the state flags of the two countries. Agreements on free trade and economic cooperation in 1993 were signed by Vyacheslav Kebich and Bronislovas Lubys on behalf of their governments.

They told representatives of the press that the agreements would help strengthen good-neighborly relations and create conditions for mutually advantageous development of bilateral ties. "Under the conditions of the market, Belarus and Lithuania are not adversaries", said Vyacheslav Kebich, "and this has been reflected in the agreements. There will be no obstacles for either transit or advantageous trade."

After the document-signing ceremony, the Belarusian delegation visited the Antakalnis Cemetery and laid flowers on the graves of people who perished for the restoration of Lithuanian independence.

During the afternoon, the Belarusian delegation was received by Lithuanian President Algirdas Brazauskas and held a meeting with Sejm Chairman Ceslovas Jursenas.

Border Troops Commander on Establishing Borders

WS1603122593 Minsk BELINFORM in Russian 1332 GMT 15 Mar 93

[Text] In an interview to VO SLAVU RODINY, General-Major Yevgeniy Bocharov, head of the Main Directorate of Border Troops, said: "The strength of the Belarusian Border Troops, currently numbering 8,000, may, in the nearest future, turn out to be insufficient for the protection of the new state borders with CIS neighbors." He referred to the recent negotiations with the Ukrainian side, at which the establishment of a state border between the republics was discussed, in particular. "We would hate to see borders separating Slav states, but nevertheless, most probably they will appear," said Bocharov. This will result in an increase in Border Troops personnel to 11,000-12,000, which will be a heavy burden for the Republic's tax-payers.

Yevgeniy Bocharov emphasized that Belarus did not come forward with an initiative to create state borders with any of its neighbors. Their appearance is an adequate response to the actions of the neighboring states. Lithuania and Latvia were the first to establish state borders, and we had to respond in order to protect the Republic's interests.

Bocharov considers that the events are developing very rapidly and that the legislature will probably have to adopt appropriate resolutions before the demarcation process is over.

"We have very good contacts with Polish, Latvian, and Lithuanian border guards," stated Bocharov, "as well as with our Ukrainian partners, who have started deploying

their troops in southern Belarus. All the issues are being solved simply and easily. If politicians could reach an understanding equally well, many problems would be avoided."

In Bocharov's view, if Border Troops were disbanded today, Belarus would be poor as a church mouse in half a year. Over the last 10 days alone, dozens of tonnes of nonferrous metals, a large number of fire arms, mercury, and more than 2 million rubles were confiscated on the border with Lithuania.

At the same time Belarusian border guards will do what they can to make the process go smoothly. A large number of check points is being created. Border crossing will be permitted 24 hours a day upon presentation of a person's ID.

Government Restricts Sale, Possession of Firearms

OW1603171393 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1536 GMT 16 Mar 93

[From the "Presidential Bulletin" feature prepared by Andrey Pershin, Andrey Petrovskiy, and Vladimir Shishlin and edited by Boris Grishchenko—following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] In an exclusive interview for INTERFAX, Gennadiy Danilov, Belarus prime minister's chief adviser on national security problems, said Belarus, in terms of the first priority issues of national importance, is now considering steps for enforcing law and order in the republic, as well as adopting crime combatting measures.

In referring to the Council of Ministers' resolution in that regard which was endorsed yesterday by the republic's prime minister, Mr. Danilov said the Finance Ministry has been assigned to set up a special extra-budgetary fund for providing material, technical and financial support to the Ministries of the Interior and State Security, as well as the Prosecutor General's Office and the courts.

In the words of Mr. Danilov, the government is earmarking for this fund 50

of the revenues originating from sales of the property which the republic is appropriating on the basis of court decisions. The executive committees of the local councils have been advised to set up similar funds for the same purposes.

"By adopting this resolution, the government is planning to increase by 1,000 officers the strength of the law enforcement structures, such as operations, investigations and criminal departments, with the strength of the republic's interior forces increasing respectively," Mr. Danilov said. He noted that the Goskomplan (Belarus State Planning Committee) and the Ministry of National Resources have been advised to allocate some of their consumer goods and material and technical resources for purchasing by barter the criminal identification equipment they need.

"Belarus power offices on location have been instructed, in the meantime, to advise all the citizens in their jurisdiction that beginning on April 10, 1993, they will have to submit to the law enforcement agencies all the firearms, ammunition and explosives illegally possessed by them," the prime minister's adviser said. In his words, the resolution in that regard, signed by Prime Minister Vyacheslav Kebich, stipulates that sales of hunting shotguns, sports firearms, ammunition and special-defense devices (gas weapons and ammunition for them) will only be legal when they are purchased through Belarus Government's specially designated stores, as well as the stores owned by Belarus Hunters' and Fishermen's Society. "The government has suspended issuance of licenses for arms sales to all organizations, except these two, until it passes special legislation in this regard," Mr. Danilov emphasized.

Low-Salaried Specialists' Minimum Wage Raised

PM1603161793 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 13 Mar 93 First Edition p 2

[INTERFAX report from the "From Our Correspondents and News Agencies" roundup: "Minimum Wage To Go Up in Belarus From April"]

[Text] The situation which has formed in the Belarusian economy is forcing the government to grant financial support only to the worst-off categories of citizen.

This was declared by State Labor Committee Chairman Georgiy Badey. He announced that the prime minister has signed a decree under which the wages of low-paid categories of specialists are increased by 10 percent, and those of teachers, doctors, and workers in culture or the arts by 6 percent. One-shot benefits to the value of 500 rubles [R] will be issued to nonworking pensioners in March. And as of 1 April the minimum working wage, which currently stands at R3,000 per month, will be increased in Belarus.

Moldova

National Democrats Demand Withdrawal of Russian Army

OW1503171993 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1416 GMT 15 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] In Chisinau on Sunday [14 March] several hundred supporters of the opposition Christian Democratic Popular Front (CDPF) staged an unauthorized demonstration, urging the authorities to take without delay steps aimed at freeing political prisoners jailed in Tiraspol, the administrative center of the self- proclaimed Republic of Dniester.

The National Democrats staged a meeting in front of the Russian diplomatic mission. They called for the immediate withdrawal of Russia's 14th Army from Moldova.

The CDPF stands for Moldova's unification with Romania. It opposes the idea of granting the status of federal members of Moldova to the self-proclaimed Gagauz Republic and Trans-Dniester.

Dniester's Smirnov Vows Independent Military Forces

AU1603111093 Chisinau BASAPRESS in English 2043 GMT 15 Mar 93

[Text] Tiraspol, BASAPRESS, 15/3/1993—Yesterday during the meeting organized in order to swear in 400 new members into the Dniestr republic's military forces, Igor Smirnov, the president of the self-proclaimed Dniester republic declared that it will continue to create its own military forces even if it is too difficult for the republican budget. Vladimir Rileakov, the president of the executive power of the city, said during this meeting that the military forces of the self-proclaimed Dniester republic "will be the guarantor of peace in the region and will serve as the best example for neighboring states". After the meeting on the Suvorov's Square there was a parade of newly formed military units.

Council Discusses Economic Relations With Romania

AU1503212893 Bucharest Radio Romania Network in Romanian 2000 GMT 15 Mar 93

[Text] An ordinary session of the Council for Coordination of Economic Relations Between the Republic of Moldova and Romania was held at the headquarters of the Moldovan Government, our special Chisinau correspondent reports.

The meeting was chaired by Nicolae Andronati, Moldova's first deputy prime minister and president of the council.

During the meeting, the participants examined the stage of implementation of the provisions included in the memorandum that was adopted at the end of the meeting between the governmental delegation from Romania and the Republic of Moldova. The stage of implementation of the protocol signed in Bucharest on 14 August 1992, was also discussed.

Snegur Departs for India Visit, Turkmenistan Stopover

OW1603130093 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1122 GMT 16 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] President Mircea Snegur of Moldova left for India on Tuesday at the head of an official delegation of his republic. During the visit, he is to meet Indian leaders and is to see historical monuments and industrial enterprises. Documents are to be signed at the end of the trip. Among them a declaration on the basic principles of relations and cooperation between Moldova and India and agreements on relations concerning the economy and trade, education, science, culture, health services, mass media, sports, tourism, and youth problems.

On the way to India, the delegation will stop over in Turkmenistan's capital Ashgabat, where on March 16 Mr. Snegur is to meet Turkmenistan's President Saparmurad Niyazov. A bilateral treaty of friendship and cooperation and a protocol on consultations between the foreign ministers of the two countries are to be signed in Ashgabat.

Arrives in India 17 Mar

LD1703091693 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 0651 GMT 17 Mar 93

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Sergey Karmalito]

[Text] New Delhi March 17 TASS—President Mircea Snegur of Moldova arrived in India on Wednesday for an official three-day visit.

A programme for his stay in Delhi includes meetings and talks with the president, vice president, prime minister, minister for external affairs and other Indian leaders.

As a result of the visit, the two sides are expected to sign documents which will lay foundations of the relations of cooperation between India and sovereign Moldova in trade, economic, scientific, technical and other fields.

Kazakhstan

Nazarbayev Issues Message Hailing Republican Guards

OW1603192493 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1537 GMT 16 Mar 93

[From the "Presidential Bulletin" feature prepared by Andrey Pershin, Andrey Petrovskiy, and Vladimir Shishlin and edited by Boris Grishchenko—following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] The text of a telegram of congratulations from Kazakh President Nursultan Nazarbayev was distributed in Alma-Ata. He devoted his message to the first anniversary of the Republican Guards. The President calls the Guards "the right wing detachment" of the republic's Armed Forces.

In his interview with INTERFAX [IF], Kim Serikbayev, the chief of the defense section of the presidential apparatus, reminded that the Republican Guards protect the President, parliament, government and participate in "military ceremonies"; currently "it is the most peaceful military unit."

IF Note: The Republican Guards were formed a year ago according to Nazarbayev's decree. The strength of the Guards is 2,000 people. Ninety percent of the Guards' soldiers and sergeants are conscripts. The March session of the republic's Supreme Soviet is to consider a bill "On Republican Guards" which envisages a contract call up to the Guards. Major General Seylbek Altybekov is the commander of the Republican Guards in Kazakhstan.

Nazarbayev Issues Resolution on Privatization Management

LD1603145593 Alma-Ata KAZTAG in Russian 1200 GMT 16 Mar 93

[Resolution by President Nursultan Nazarbayev on further improving the management of privatization of state property; issued in Alma-Ata on 5 March—read by announcer]

[Text] With a view to conducting a single state policy of dismantling state ownership and introducing privatization, I resolve:

1. A single system of state bodies for dismantling state ownership and privatizing republican and communal property shall be established. It will consist of the State Committee of the Republic of Kazakhstan for Managing State Property and the territorial committees for state property.

The State Committee of the Republic of Kazakhstan for Managing State Property shall be entrusted with issues concerning the organization, implementation, and monitoring of the single state policy for dismantling state ownership and privatizing republican and communal property.

2. The heads of local administrations shall abolish the existing committees, commissions, and departments for privatizing communal property. In future, they shall not create parallel bodies for dismantling state ownership and privatizing communal property.

3. It is recommended that the heads of local administrations appoint the chairman of the territorial committee for state property to the post of deputy head of the corresponding administration.

[Signed] N. Nazarbayev, president of the Republic of Kazakhstan
[Dated] Alma-Ata, 5 March 1993

Tajikistan

Checkpoints Set Up; Public Reluctant To Surrender Arms

LD1703100293 Moscow Mayak Radio Network in Russian 0900 GMT 17 Mar 93

[Text] On the instructions of the Tajikistan National Security Committee and with the assistance of Russian troops, a number of checkpoints have been set up in Dushanbe. According to a report from the National Security Committee press center, this measure is connected with the reluctance of many citizens living in Tajikistan to surrender firearms and with the threat of a new offensive against the city by opposition forces.

Operation To Disarm Groups Begins

LD1603221193 Moscow Ostankino Television First Channel Network in Russian 1800 GMT 16 Mar 93

[From the "Novosti" newscast]

[Text] A large-scale operation has begun in Dushanbe to disarm all the illegal armed formations and groupings that continue to remain in the capital of Tajikistan, despite a decree by the Supreme Soviet on surrendering arms. All kinds of motor transport are being subjected to thorough checks. Considerable forces of the Ministry of Internal Affairs and the State Security Committee are taking part in the operation.

Earlier, Sangak Safarov, leader of the Tajikistan National Front, announced the disbandment of his combat detachments and stressed that from now on the National Front will remain a social and political organization.

Operations Against Opposition Denied

OW1603150593 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1434 GMT 16 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Not a single unit of the Tajik pro-government forces has penetrated into the Gorno-Badakhshan Autonomous Region or fought in its territory, sources in the Tajik government informed Interfax. These sources

also said that the rumors about the beginning of a large-scale offensive in Gorny Badakhshan, circulated by some of the media, were caused by the incident on March 14, when four jeeps with 5 - 6 armed men each, appeared on the Sagirdasht mountain passes. The armed men told the local population that they intended to set up their post in that place.

According to unchecked reports, the local population offered resistance. One of the local residents was killed.

By now, the group of armed fighters has left the place.

Chairman of the Regional Council of the Gorno-Badakhshan Autonomous Region, Akbarsho Iskandarov, said that the provocation had been staged to foil the session of the regional council which was to discuss relations between Gorny Badakhshan and the Tajik authorities.

Meanwhile, the confiscation of the illegally kept weapons continues in Dushanbe. According to some sources, over the past few months, the law-enforcement bodies have confiscated about 4,000 firearms. About 25,000 firearms are still in the hands of the population.

End to Lawlessness Urged

LD1603205593 Dushanbe Radio Dushanbe Network in Tajik 1200 GMT 16 Mar 93

["Appeal" by Sangak Safarov, chairman of the People's Front of Tajikistan—recorded]

[Excerpts] Dear mothers, sisters, fathers, brothers, and sons. It will soon be a year since we gathered on Ozodi Square to defend the legally elected government, the independence of our native Tajikistan, and true freedom for the individual, and to say no to the encroaching danger from black forces bent on eliminating the progress of history and restoring the ways of the Middle Ages. Our noble aims penetrated the hearts of hundreds of thousands of our compatriots and met with the support of the overwhelming majority of the republic's population. More and more people, to whom the freedom and independence of their beloved motherland were dear, joined our ranks. The result was the emergence in Tajikistan of the People's Front which, without the slightest hesitation, rose to defend the citizens' honor and dignity and the principles of genuine democracy and people's power.

I should like today to offer words of sincere gratitude to the representatives of all nations and ethnic groups which live in the republic—Russians, Ukrainians, Uzbeks, Kazakhs, Kyrgyz, and other brothers—the residents of Kulyab, Leninabad, and Kurgan-Tyube oblasts and Tursunzoda, Gissar, Shakhrinau, and other rayons that have made an heroic contribution to gaining victory over the enemies of their people.

The Islamic fundamentalists, false democrats and their (?allies), hiding behind various kinds of slogans, wanted to destroy their own people and establish an authentic fascist regime in Tajikistan, plunging the country into a bloody (?conflict), into an abyss of lawlessness and arbitrary rule. They did all this in order to guarantee limitless power for themselves. [passage omitted]

Comrades, our successes in restoring legality and law and order (?make it incumbent on) the newly independent, democratic state based on law not to give its enemies any peace. They are endeavoring to hamper us in every way, and hankering after the old days when they were committing murders, stealing, looting and making off with private and state-owned transport, appropriating the people's property on an unprecedented scale and committing other dark deeds. Criminal elements who are still unexposed continue to commit their crimes in order to blacken the legitimately elected bodies of power and undermine their authority.

They have, however, already altered their tactics and are doing so in the name of the fighters of the People's Front. They don't think that the People's Front was created and acts so that the republic might prosper. They are in favour of robbing their own people and committing evil deeds against them. The signature on this is familiar to us, and we will take every measure to expose these black forces and bring charges against them under the law.

It is in order to put an end as quickly as possible to these acts of lawlessness which are being carried out in the name of the fighters of the People's Front that I am appealing today to the leaders and members of all People's Front headquarters, whether in the capital or in the oblasts and rayons, to ask them, if they want to continue serving with the Committee for National Security, the Ministry of Internal Affairs, or the Ministry of Defense, let that be their choice. I suggest that our other comrades, the members of the combat groups hand over their weapons according to the established procedure and begin living civilian lives.

Whoever holds dear our victory, won at the cost of great losses and by dint of great effort, I would ask to follow my advice. I have faith in you and I am convinced that we will expose the enemies of the people wherever they are and under whatever disguise they may operate.

I wish you all happiness, well-being, health, and prosperity. Thank you for your attention.

Troops Abroad Urged To Continue Service

LD1603151393 Moscow Radio Rossii Network in Russian 1200 GMT 16 Mar 93

[Text] The Tajikistan Supreme Soviet Presidium and the Council of Ministers issued an appeal today to Tajikistani servicemen serving in the armed forces of other CIS countries to continue carrying out their military duty. It is highly likely that the appeal was issued in connection with the fact that servicemen called up from Tajikistan strive to return to the homeland in view of the difficult situation in the republic. In this connection Tajikistan's leadership has assured Tajikistani soldiers that peace and calm will be restored in the country.

The document stresses that Tajikistan's defense capacity is ensured by all the states that signed the treaty on collective security in Tashkent.

Turkmenistan

Niyazov Discusses Foreign Policy, Military Doctrine

OW1603171993 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1538 GMT 16 Mar 93

["Exclusive interview" with President Saparmurad Niyazov by unidentified INTERFAX special correspondent in Ashgabat; date not given; from the "Presidential Bulletin" feature prepared by Andrey Pershin, Andrey Petrovskiy, and Vladimir Shishlin and edited by Boris Grishchenko—following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Presidential Bulletin completes the publication of Saparmurad Niyazov's exclusive interview:

Q: How would you assess Turkmenistan's foreign policy? Can one talk about the emergence of new foreign-policy partners and priorities?

A: I think our foreign policy is rather efficient. Last year, Turkmenistan became a UN member, signed the Helsinki document on security and cooperation in Europe, and concluded mutually advantageous agreements with Iran, Turkey, India and China. Our relations with the Gulf states are very good indeed. You understand, I'm talking about foreign countries now. Generally speaking, although the former Soviet republics are treated with misgiving in the world, Turkmenistan is gaining the reputation of a strong and reliable partner.

Turkmenistan is considered to be a stable and reliable partner not only by politicians, but also by businessmen, which attests to our viability.

As to our priorities, we attach special importance to our neighbors. We have done everything we could to turn our borders into borders of peace and cooperation. We are surrounded by friendly states—Iran, Uzbekistan, Afghanistan, Azerbaijan and Kazakhstan, with which we have concluded corresponding treaties. As to Afghanistan, we have already met with Afghan officials, so when the situation in Afghanistan gets back to normal, we shall conclude a mutually advantageous agreement with that country.

In short, we attach priority importance to the neighboring states with the same historical, cultural and religious roots, although Russia is undoubtedly one of our biggest partners. Well, these are our foreign-policy priorities, but any gradation would be very conventional, of course. We advocate mutually advantageous cooperation with all states. We maintain stable relations with businessmen from Italy, Argentina, Germany, Japan and other states—it will take me too much time to enumerate all of them. In short, whereas foreign-policy priorities do exist, in business they are disappearing.

Q: What role do you assign to Iran and Turkey in your long-term foreign-policy program? What importance do you attach to Russia?

A: The Russian and Western media have written and said a great deal about this. But everything they have said and written roughly boils down to the struggle for increasing spheres of influence. The situation is much simpler, however I'm convinced that Iran, Turkey and Russia are well aware that a stable, independent and neutral Turkmenistan is the guarantor of stability in the region. We have concluded full-scale agreements with all of these states which actually maintain the balance of state interests in the region.

All the talk about the growing Islamic factor and pan-Turkic moods, and all the complaints about Russia's decreasing influence, are too far-fetched. Look at people in the streets and talk with Russians and citizens of other nationalities! You will not feel a trace of fundamentalism or nationalism. The only manifestation of the Islamic factor in Turkmenistan is that the number of mosques has increased and that religious rites, once performed secretly, are now performed openly.

So, as the head of state, I declare that we shall broaden mutually advantageous relations with Iran, Turkey and Russia. Such relations supplement each other, do not come into conflict. These states are our friends and partners, and we shall stick to this belief.

Q: What are the main principles of your military doctrine? Do you think Russian and Turkmen armed forces may become partners in the future?

A: Our military policy is based on the need to ensure Turkmenistan's independence and territorial integrity. The Turkmen armed forces have no other tasks. The problem of security is partly solved due to the fact that Turkmenistan borders on friendly states. Besides that, we have concluded military agreements with Russia which meet the interests of Turkmenistan and Russia, and suit other countries of the region, as well.

We lay no territorial claims on neighboring states, and nor do they. So territorial conflicts are absolutely ruled out.

We are building armed forces of our own. They will not be too numerous, but will be efficient enough to fulfil the set tasks.

As far as nuclear weapons go, we do and will observe the principles guaranteeing Turkmenistan's nuclear-free status.

Regarding future cooperation between the Russian and Turkmen armies, we have already set up joint units which will defend the interests of Turkmenistan and Russia. What cooperation can be stronger? And yet, the Russian press tends to interpret this in the most unexpected ways. It alleges, for instance, that Russia's southern borders are poorly protected and that its military presence in the region is not sufficient. This means that some Russian politicians still have imperial ambitions and consider

Turkmenistan's state border to be its southern frontier. Well, the empire has become a thing of the past and there can be no roll-back to the old days. Russian-Turkmen cooperation, including military, is now based on cardinally new principles.

Russian military colleges train personnel for the Turkmen army, and Russian and Turkmen officers serve in the same units. This practice will become a tradition, I believe.

I must say, however, that we shall establish military cooperation with other countries, as well. This does not go against the principles of our military doctrine or the policy of neutrality.

Niyazov To Visit U.S.; Citizens Receive Free Utilities

LD1503204193 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 2020 GMT 15 Mar 93

[By TURKMEN-PRESS for TASS]

[Text] Ashgabat March 15 TASS—Petroleum, natural gas, cotton, Astrakhan pelts and carpets are the trumps in the reforms implemented by President Saparmurad Niyazov, 53, in his republic. He will travel to the United States on March 21.

Turkmenistan ranks fourth after Russia, the United States and Canada in petroleum and natural gas production - 87 billion cubic meters a year. With four million people inhabiting the republic, it is clear why the president made an unprecedented step on January 1, 1993 when he declared that citizens of his republic will be supplied with gas, electricity and water free of charge.

Returns from natural gas sales can become even bigger if Turkmenistan completes the construction of a 5,200-km gas pipe-line via Turkey and Bulgaria to Europe which is ready to buy more than 30 billion cubic meters of natural gas.

Returns from sales of other "trumps" are less than one half, although Turkmenistan produces more cotton per capita than any other country of the world - more than 300 kilogram. By the year 2000, one-third of all cotton grown in the republic will be processed locally at enterprises built with foreign partners, including the plant erected by the Italian firm "TPL" to produce 50 million square meters of cotton fabrics a year.

Turkmenistan sells petroleum to Commonwealth member countries and can further increase its sales, as geophysicists say that petroleum and natural gas can be produced on more than 80 per cent of the republic's territory.

Natural wealth is not all. Economic trumps mean little without social stability and concord of all ethnic and national communities inhabiting the republic. This is what President Saparmurad Niyazov and his government are seeking to secure.

Friendship Treaty Signed With Moldova

LD1603193193 Moscow Mayak Radio Network in Russian 1800 GMT 16 Mar 93

[Text] The talks held in Ashgabat today between Turkmen President Saparmurad Niyazov and Moldovan President Mircea Snegur ended with the signing of a treaty of friendship and cooperation. President Snegur is here on a brief official visit on his way to India. As Mircea Snegur said at a news conference, Moldova has more mutual understanding with Turkmenistan than with other CIS countries. The president of Turkmenistan holds the same point of view.

Uzbekistan

Investment Insurance Accord Signed With U.S.

LD1603225793 Tashkent UZBEKISTAN APN in Russian 1200 GMT 16 Mar 93

[Text] Uzbekistan and the United States have signed a treaty on insurance for capital and other investments. Currently there are 77 joint American-Uzbek enterprises operating in Uzbekistan. This was stated in an interview with U.S. Ambassador Henry Lee Clarke.

The conclusion of trade agreements between the two countries is planned for the near future. Uzbekistan was one of the first of the former Soviet republics with which the U.S. Government concluded a treaty on the activities of the U.S. Peace Corps.

The interview was on the occasion of the first anniversary of the opening of the U.S. Embassy in Uzbekistan.

Ambassador to Moscow on Relations With Russia

MK1603112493 Moscow MOSKOVSKAYA PRAVDA in Russian 16 Mar 93 pp 1,2

[Interview with Yusuf Abdullayev, Uzbekistan ambassador to Russia, by M. Stoyanov: "Freedom Has To Be Handled With Care. The Uzbekistan Ambassador to Moscow Believes That the Viability of the CIS Depends Primarily on Russia"]

[Excerpt] [passage omitted] Mr. Ambassador, let me ask you this question: What kind of relationship do you have with the Russian Foreign Ministry and other institutions in Moscow: strictly in accordance with protocol, or more confidential?—I very nearly said "Soviet-like."

[Abdullayev] When necessary we observe protocol, diplomatic etiquette, of course. As for daily working relations, naturally, we dispense with formalities. We simply decide many matters on the telephone. It would be strange if we were to behave otherwise. We are pretty close to one another and our historical destinies are too intertwined—to say nothing of the 600,000 Russians living in Uzbekistan—for us to suddenly place our relationship within the formal framework of classic diplomacy. It would simply be unnatural.

[Stoyanov] Many problems have cropped up between Russia and the other former Union republics since the breakup of the USSR, particularly in the sphere of economic relations. How has that affected Uzbekistan?

[Abdullayev] If one is talking about the division of the former Union's property, I think we have managed to resolve many questions painlessly. We have achieved the "zero option"—we have transferred all our foreign debts and assets to Russia and in that way we have eased this difficult problem. But we have different views of economic strategy. That is natural—Uzbekistan has chosen its own path of renewal and progress, on the basis of its ethno-historical way of life, way of thinking, traditions, and customs. Having set ourselves the task of forming a socially oriented market economy, we do not want to encounter the upheavals other CIS countries, including Russia, are going through. So, while recognizing various forms of ownership, we are moving toward the market in stages, without any dramatic leaps forward. Because the main task for us today is to ensure stability in society and an optimal standard of living, which, as you can appreciate, is not that simple in present conditions. Particularly when you consider that we are having to import 60 percent of consumer goods at the moment. Nonetheless, we are carrying out this task, while conducting a firm policy of protecting the interests of the badly off. Judge for yourself: The contents of the shopping basket in Uzbekistan cost around 2,100 rubles [R] compared with average pay of R5,400 in the republic. For example, one kilogram of beef costs R80 here—I am talking about prices on 1 February. You can now feed a family of five or six people on one wage.

As you know, we have big families here, and we have no right to endanger their well-being by plunging blindly into ill-prepared experiments. It must be done gradually, step by step. Otherwise we will not be seeing any market at all. It will all simply blow up in our face.

Indeed, we are still forced to gear ourselves to centralized planning, which not only provides Uzbekistan with a more or less normal working tempo, but makes it possible for us as partners to guarantee the fulfillment of pledges, in particular with regard to Russia.

[Stoyanov] If you believe the experts, Tashkent is increasingly looking to the Turkish, Chinese, and, judging by the recent talks in Tehran, the Iranian model. Does this mean Uzbekistan is fed up with the economic chaos in Russia and that it will be switching the compass needle from north to south and east and will be leaving the ruble zone?

[Abdullayev] Current talk about Uzbekistan's leaving the ruble zone is simply adventurist. The question may possibly arise in the future. But as long as Russia does not introduce its own national currency, we will not do that either. Here is confirmation—as of January, the Uzbekistan Central Bank set hard-currency rates for the ruble that were agreed with the Russian Central Bank. As for the other models, we do not deny that the economic evolution of Turkey, with which we are developing very fruitful relations, and the Chinese experience are attractive to us. We use to go around all in the same clothes, irrespective of the level of development and specific ethnic features. Now everyone is trying to find the clothes that suit him best. Indeed, Russia too is now faced with a definite choice—either it follows Western models, which are too tough for it at the moment, or it tries the Oriental model, including the Chinese.

As for China, Deng Xiaoping acted wisely when he opened the free economic zones, while avoiding encroaching on Mao Zedong's authority, which is still a factor for the Chinese people. We do not know what would happen to the Chinese experiment if this balance were upset.

[Stoyanov] You mean that the rehabilitation of the name of Rashidov is playing the same role in Uzbekistan today?

[Abdullayev] No official rehabilitation is taking place. Most Uzbeks have retained their good feelings for him throughout recent years. And you have to respect the people's feelings. Otherwise trouble is unavoidable. To be honest, the sensational "cotton affair" was whipped up by his successors, in their own political interests; these were people who had sworn eternal devotion to Rashidov when he was alive. As a result, not only Rashidov, but the entire republic was besmirched. You could have had a similarly successful "tea affair" in Georgia or something else in Moldavia at the time...

But we have digressed somewhat. The main thing we must all appreciate now is that irrespective of what economic model a particular Commonwealth republic follows, we cannot get anywhere without one another, despite friction today and in the future. Furthermore, no one outside will help us, except by slapping us on the back and saying: You are working well, gentlemen. So we have to find the life preserver within our own former common home. And the fate of the CIS depends primarily on a wise, well-judged, consistent Russian policy. That is clear. Otherwise the breakup of the Commonwealth into regional blocks cannot be ruled out.

[Stoyanov] We have been talking mainly about the economy, so let us touch on politics, in particular the processes about which there has been much talk of late in connection with the confrontation between the authorities and the opposition in Uzbekistan. What is it all about?

[Abdullayev] What it is above all, I think, is that people who try to portray the situation in terms of human rights violations in Uzbekistan, the smothering of democracy, and so on, are often highly subjective for various reasons and are simply unwilling to analyze what is being said and written in a responsible and thorough manner, in accordance with the current point in time. Moreover they sometimes forget that what they are taking about is an independent state, not a former union republic. I am not going to talk about specific examples or analyze, for

example, the reasons behind the so-called "Pulatov affair." But I make no secret of the fact that it is extremely nice to hear colleagues at other embassies say that Uzbekistan is currently an oasis of calm on the map of the CIS, where there are no bullets flying, where there is no bloodshed, and where one does not hear the groans of "nonindigenous" people. I would claim that the flood of people into Russia from various regions has included hardly any Russian-speaking people from Uzbekistan. It was no accident that most of the Russian-speaking population voted for Karimov, believing in him and his program as a guarantee of their national and civil rights, while "Interdvizheniye," which reflected the interests of that sector of society, disbanded, because it was no longer needed.

What happened, then? When I. Karimov became president he suggested to the leaders of the opposition at the time that they participate in the process of the spiritual and national rebirth of our people and work together, and he provided opportunities for public dialogue on the air. Many of these politicians responded to the appeal and came and worked in the new state structures; others organized their own parties and movements with rather unclear programs and goals, such as "Birlik," for example. The crucial thing for them was not a constructive approach to the solution of society's very complex questions, but merely the negation of everything the legally elected authorities were doing. They had a very narrow social base and very broad ambitions. A familiar phenomenon. But society, in which the wound of the tragic events in Fergana had not yet healed, needed above all calm and civil accord, not provocative political demonstrations. So the Supreme Soviet imposed restrictions on holding rallies and marches in the street, while allowing people to hold political actions behind locked doors, if they so wished.

Neither can we accept the casual propaganda of violence and pornography in the pages of some, if not many Russian publications and on the television screen. It is an insult to our people's ethnic traditions, to the roots of which we are now returning, and to the national custom of respect for one another. The resolute rejection of the monopoly of one ideology and one philosophy does not mean at all that we have to accept meekly the infiltration of ways that are alien to our customs, that are alien to the very principles of humanity. Every citizen of Uzbekistan, regardless of nationality, whether he is Uzbek, Russian, or Ukrainian, has absolutely equal rights. But we are not giving citizenship to immorality. And I think that is the essence of what some people are calling the violation of human rights in Uzbekistan.

No, certain measures that have had to be taken were dictated by concern for people, for a peaceful life. And the fact that at the moment we have the lowest crime rate in the CIS, although, alas, it is tending to increase, confirms this to some extent. Democracy can only survive if it is based on law and on firm executive authority. Otherwise it becomes chaotic.

We can observe this in various parts of the former Union at the moment. Democracy, like the market, is not a piece of fashionable clothing, it is not an end in itself; it is a means of forming new values, of achieving a qualitatively new standard of living. We should not forget that. Just as we should not forget that freedom must be handled as cautiously and carefully as a traveler, who has gone thirsty for an agonizingly long time, treats water. [passage omitted]

Armenia

Foreign Ministry Spokesman Clarifies Stance on Karabakh

NC1603202193 Yerevan Radio Yerevan International Service in Armenian 1630 GMT 16 Mar 93

[Text] Following the meeting of the Rome working group of the Minsk Conference for the peaceful resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh problem within the CSCE framework, Azerbaijani propaganda channels and some Russian, Turkish, and other sources—which in their turn quoted the information provided by Azerbaijan—have frequently been publishing statements by the Azerbaijani [word indistinct] officials on alleged agreements reached between the participants in the Rome meeting, in particular on the alleged granting of extensive autonomy in Nagorno-Karabakh compatible with international standards.

In this connection, Armenian Foreign Ministry Press Secretary Aram Safaryan made the following statement to reporters. Here is his statement in full:

[Begin Safaryan recording] In light of this, I want to make the following statement: The latest meeting of the Rome working group of the Minsk Conference is discussing those matters, which are (?widely) known, and on which the Armenian presidential press service has issued a statement. No other matter has been discussed between the representatives of Armenia, Nagorno-Karabakh, and Azerbaijan in Rome.

It was obvious there that Armenia's position remains the same. Its position is: Any question related to Karabakh's status can be examined with the full participation of the representatives of Nagorno-Karabakh only after an immediate, unconditional, and stable cease-fire.

Armenia has declared many times that our state in a way has been dragged into the Karabakh conflict through plots. This is because it could not have remained indifferent to the innumerable and constant violations of human rights against the Armenians in Nagorno-Karabakh.

The Azerbaijani side is trying to present the Karabakh conflict as an Armenian threat to Azerbaijan's territorial integrity. But in fact, both Armenia and Nagorno-Karabakh have declared many times their readiness to establish the immediate [words indistinct] cease-fire as evidence of their goodwill and as a first step toward creating lasting guarantees for the reestablishment of peace.

Since being rekindled, the Karabakh problem has continued as a political and a military conflict because the Azerbaijani authorities have disregarded the right of self-determination of the Armenians in Nagorno-Karabakh. Therefore, real guarantees for actual peace (?could be achieved) by bringing the representatives of Azerbaijan and Nagorno-Karabakh to the negotiating table, which does not preclude other parties interested in the political resolution of the Karabakh problem participating in these negotiations.

As regards the alleged plan proposed at the conclusion of the latest meeting between Russian Foreign Minister Kozyrev and Turkish Foreign Minister Cetin—the Turkish and Azerbaijani press have tendentiously and widely disseminated this plan—the Armenian authorities have no official information on the details of this plan. [end recording]

Azerbaijanis Said Massing Tanks, Troops Around Lachinskiy

NC1603171293 Yerevan Radio Yerevan in Azeri 1430 GMT 16 Mar 93

[Text] Dear listeners, we now report on the latest incidents in the Nagorno-Karabakh Republic [NKR] and on the border between Armenia and Azerbaijan.

First, we wish to comment on Azerbaijani Defense Ministry press center reporting. It is common knowledge that it distorts incidents and facts. Its leading officials have been replaced, but the center continues to distort the facts. It has reported Azerbaijani National Army [ANA] successes on NKR battlefronts without focusing on ANA losses in those areas. The press center claimed that ANA units counterattacked from positions around Mardakert on 11 March [words indistinct]. And it claimed they captured Akop-Kamari, Magavuz, and Mokhratag, including the heights around them. All that is untrue. The NKR Self-Defense Command Headquarters revealed that there were only exchanges of fire near Dzhiniyatag, Dzhanyatag, and Metzshen on 14 March. ANA units attacked Gulyatag, but failed to achieve their objective. NKR self-defense forces rebuffed the enemy and the ANA units suffered casualties and were forced to retreat.

The situation in Nagorno-Karabakh is rather tense. ANA units have maintained their attacks and clashes are taking place around Dzhanyatag, Dzhinyatag, and [placename indistinct] in Mardakertskiy Rayon. The situation elsewhere in the NKR was relatively peaceful yesterday and last night.

According to reports we have received, the Azerbaijan Military Command Headquarters is massing many units and armored vehicles in the south and north of the humanitarian corridor in Lachinskiy Rayon. It seems the enemy is preparing for a broad attack on the corridor, but the Armenian freedom fighters will repel every attack in that area. NKR self-defense forces effectively guard the vital corridor.

The situation in the border region between Armenia and Azerbaijan remains unstable, although the number of exchanges of fire and clashes has decreased significantly. Azerbaijan maintains sporadic, provocative activities in the border areas. Military positions in Azerbaijan's Tauzskiy Rayon shelled Nerkin-Karmiragyur in Tavushskiy Rayon with tanks and artillery on the night of 14 March. The town suffered. Armenian military units

retaliated, silencing the enemy fire emplacements. Yesterday, Nerkin-Karmiragyur was fired on from Tauzskiy Rayon again. A resident was killed when Noyemberyan was fired on from military positions in Kazakhskiy Rayon at 1950 last night. Armenian military units returned fire.

All this confirms that Azerbaijan is not interested in establishing peace and security in the border areas. Although the neighboring republic purports to support peace, it maintains its provocations to create tension between the two sides.

We now present a recent report from the front line in Nagorno- Karabakh: Armenian self-defense forces launched a counterattack after rebuffing an offensive by ANA units and liberated (Hovanasyan) in Mardakertskiy Rayon. They established positions on the heights near [placename indistinct]. The NKR Self-Defense Command Headquarters has revealed that the enemy is massing many men and military vehicles in Agdamskiy and Fizulinskiy Rayons.

Forces Repel Azerbaijani Attacks

NC1603141993 Yerevan Armenia's Radio First Program Network in Armenian 1300 GMT 16 Mar 93

[Text] The Armenian Defense Ministry Press Service reported that Nerkin-Karmiragpyur, in Tavushskiy Rayon, was shelled from Azerbaijani military bases in Tauzskiy Rayon on 15 March. The shelling took place between 1720-2030.

Noyemberyan town was shelled at around 2000 last night; one resident was killed. The fire came from the Azerbaijani military bases in Kazakhskiy Rayon.

The Armenian border guards in Tavushskiy and Noyemberyanskiy rayons retaliated against the enemy's positions.

Relative calm prevailed in the rest of border regions.

KARABAKH NEWS AGENCY reported that the situation is tense on the Mardakertskiy front. The Armenian self-defense forces repelled relentless attacks by the Azerbaijani National Army and liberated the village of Tonashen in Mardakertskiy Rayon. They also consolidated their positions on the heights near the village of Matagis.

According to intelligence reports gathered by the self-defense forces headquarters, large concentrations of enemy forces have been observed in Agdamskiy and Fizulinskiy Rayons.

Stepanakert reports indicate that it is relatively calm in the other regions of the Nagorno-Karabakh Republic.

It is also relatively calm along the Lachin corridor, only a minor exchange of fire took place in the northern sector last night. The Goris-Lachin-Stepanakert road is functioning unimpeded.

Azerbaijan

Elchibey Expresses 'Anxiety' Over Russian Congress

LD1603133593 Baku Radio Baku Network in Azeri 0300 GMT 16 Mar 93

[Text] As you know, Abulfaz Elchibey, president of the Republic of Azerbaijan, has issued a statement in connection with events that took place at the Eighth Congress of People's Deputies of the Russian Federation. The statement says: The events that took place at the Eighth Congress of People's Deputies of the Russian Federation caused deep anxiety in Azerbaijan. The increase in political tension in Russia cannot fail to affect the internal affairs of the neighboring states which have close ties with Russia. The concern about returning to the past deprives the conservative forces of calmness. Recently, they have become noticeably active in all former Soviet republics, including Azerbaijan. Taking advantage of [word indistinct] of the transitional period, these forces with their destructive activities in both political and economic spheres give impetus only to destruction and deepening of the crisis, thus aggravating the people's suffering.

Azerbaijan resolutely supports the efforts of the people of Russia to determine their future by a democratic process and also the main [word indistinct] line of the president and the government of Russia. It is impossible to permit those who desperately wish to turn back the wheel of history to take advantage of the conflict that has come about.

Security Official Warns Against Border Violations

LD1603102693 Baku Radio Baku Network in Azeri 0300 GMT 16 Mar 93

[Text] Colonel Arif Alyarov, head of the border troops general staff of the National Security Ministry of the republic, said during his talk with the correspondent of AZERTAG: We have undertaken all border communications along 604 km [word indistinct] borders and have begun protection of state borders in this field. This auspicious measure which was implemented under difficult conditions and in a short period of time, is a result of the intensive efforts of our border guards, of all state establishments located on the border of our republic, and especially of the relevant sections of the presidential apparatus. It is known to all that in the area which is under the supervision of the mobile teams, the situation has recently assumed a criminal nature. This was the new aggression of the imperial policy which is very dangerous for our republic. Unfortunately, some of our so-called fellow-citizens also contributed to acts of violation by Russian soldiers who were on the roads. Rules are now being worked out for this area. I would also like to point out that if anyone who violates the border does not comply with the order, in cases envisaged by law, weapons will be used against him. The office of the commandant will establish its task on the basis of the principle of good-neighborliness complying with the

execution of the law on borders and noninterference in each other's internal affairs.

Foreign Minister on 'Balanced' Middle East Relations

NC1603145993 Baku TURAN in English 1213 GMT 16 Mar 93

[Text] Baku, 16 March (TURAN)—"We came forward for balanced policy in the Near East" announced Minister of Foreign Affairs Tofik Gasymov in his TV interview. By words of the minister, Azerbaijan supports Resolution of the UN Number 238 and 342 [numbers as received], which stipulate rights of Palestinians.

As for establishment of diplomatic relations with the states of the Near East, first they will be settled with Saudi Arabia, Egypt, countries of the Persian Gulf and with Israel. "Good relations with Islam countries of the Near East are extremely important for Azerbaijan as from the point of view of religious community and the great financial-economical potential of these states", said Gasymov.

Touching upon relations with Israel, the minister said, that Azerbaijan will build relations with this country because dozens of thousands of Jews live on the territory of Azerbaijan and there are dozens of thousands the former citizens of Azerbaijan in Israel. Besides Israel has a great authority in political and economical circles of Europe and America, which makes co-operation with this country very attractive, remarked the minister. At last, Azerbaijan hopes to get from Israel progressive agricultural technique, which is extremely necessary for development of agrarian section of Azerbaijan, remarked Tofik Gasymov.

Georgia

Foreign Ministry Protests Russian 'Aggression'

LD1703113093 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1055 GMT 17 Mar 93

[By GIA-TASS correspondent]

[Text] Tbilisi, 17 Mar (ITAR-TASS)—The Foreign Ministry of the Republic of Georgia today resolutely protested to the Russian Federation Foreign Ministry over "Russian troops' military actions on Georgian territory" and demanded urgent measures to "stop the Russian troops' armed aggression against the Republic of Georgia."

The Georgian Minstry of Foreign Affairs says in its note that the situation in Abkhazia has sharply deteriorated in the last few days: "On 14-15 March Russian military planes bombed the places where the Georgian Army is deployed and residential quarters of the city of Sukhumi. As a result of bombing there are 107 dead and several hundred wounded among the peaceful population, 100 houses destroyed and 600 damaged. On the night of 15-16 March Abkhaz military formations supported by the Russian Federation air force carried out incessant shelling of Sukhumi. In the early morning of 16 March the Abkhazian separatists and their mercenaries with the support of Russian troops went over to the offensive."

The Georgian Ministry of Foreign Affairs "qualifes as a military aggression against Georgia" such facts as "the Russian side ignoring the sovereign state's demands to withdraw subunits of the Russian troops from the conflict zone, planning a widescale offensive with the participation of Russian Army specialists, the transfer of the vehicle convoy carrying the Russian troops' ammunition, military equipment and personnel, and constant bombing of Sukhumi residential areas."

Shevardnadze Statements, Action on Abkhazia Reported

Briefs Parliament on 'Russo-Georgian Conflict'

LD1603180893 Tbilisi CONTACT INFORMATION AGENCY in Russian 1110 GMT 16 Mar 93

[Text] Today's session of the Georgian Parliament began with a speech by Eduard Shevardnadze, chairman of the parliament and head of state, devoted to the aggravation of the Georgian-Abkhaz conflict. E. Shevardnadze reported that throughout the night Sukhumi came under mass enemy artillery-fire. The defense line was breached in two places as a result of which there are many casualties—both among fighters and among the civilian population.

This morning, Georgian armed formations localized their forces, and reserve subunits were also attached to military operations. However, the situation around the towns remains extremely tense.

Acoording to available information, this morning an armed column crossed the Psou river while the enemy's hardware remains concentrated on the approaches to Sukhumi. "I think we will do everything possible to keep the word we gave to Sukhumi's population and not give the town away to the enemy," the head of state declared. Dealing with the causes of what has happened, Eduard Shevardnadze noted that it is obvious that what is happening is a Russo-Georgian conflict, although it is not known if the Russian president is involved.

What goal is Russia pursuing? I think we are dealing with a very carefully thought-out military operation prepared by reactionary forces in Russia who have decided to settle their internal [words indistinct] by carrying out aggressive acts in Georgia, Eduard Shevardnadze declared. Continuous bombings and the problems surrounding the Russian military subunits deployed in Eshera are confirmation of this, as is the fact that at (?yesterday's) meeting with Vladimir Zemskiy, ambassador extraordinary and plenipotentiary of the Russian Federation to Georgia, he reported about his intention to fly to Moscow to participate in Russo-Georgian talks. Special attention should be attached to the fact that the Russian stance at the talks has become noticeably tougher. However, [words indistinct] under such circumstances, continued [words indistinct], should show special caution and foresight and it won't

tolerate unlawful actions against the Russian army units located on the territory of Georgia.

Eduard Shevardnadze expressed confidence that the world public will not remain indifferent to the problems in Russo-Georgian relations and that the Russian people, in turn, will not allow the further escalation of the conflict. I am also sure that the Russian president will ultimately decide to withdraw military subunits of the Russian army from Eshera, the presence of which is too expensive for us.

The head of state then reported about his intention to fly to Sukhumi and meet the civilian population and commanders of military units after which they will decide to declare a general mobilization. "At the present stage, I, as commander-in-chief, declare a mobilization alert," Eduard Shevardnadze declared.

In conclusion, the head of state spoke about the measures taken by the Georgian authorities to remove tension in the conflict zone.

After his appearance at the parliamentary session, Eduard Shevardnadze flew to Sukhumi.

More on Statement to Parliament

PM1603170393 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 17 Mar 93 First Edition p 1

[Besik Urigashvili report: "Abkhaz Troops Storm Sukhumi, Shevardnadze Accuses Russia of Aggression"]

[Excerpts] "In practice we are dealing with the start of an open Russian-Georgian conflict," Georgian Leader E. Shevardnadze declared on the morning of 16 March at a sitting of parliament after the situation on the entire front line along the River Gumista deteriorated sharply during the night of 15-16 March. [passage omitted]

The extreme exacerbation of the situation and the threat hanging over Sukhumi forced Georgian leader Shevardnadze to make a special statement at today's parliament sitting in which he declared a state of premobilization readiness. Shevardnadze announced that he is flying to Sukhumi immediately with T. Kitovani, minister of defense, and J. Ioseliani, first deputy chairman of the National Defense and Security Council, where, after assessing the situation at first hand, it is possible that he will declare a general mobilization, and he asked parliament and local organs of power to grant every assistance in this.

"I have given much thought to what is driving Russia," Eduard Shevardnadze said. "I believe that the conservative forces which gained a victory at the Russian Congress want to shift the center of chaos to Georgia, thereby releasing steam from the Russian boiler. Russia's ambassador to Georgia, V. Zemskiy, was with me yesterday, and he declared that he had to return to Moscow. I do not think this is a coincidence. An analysis of recent events shows that what happened in Sukhumi was a well-planned military action. Certain circles in Russia knew precisely when it was due to take place, and precisely what was due to happen."

Shevardnadze also declared that, according to intelligence reports, during the night of 15-16 March a large military column crossed the Russian-Georgian border. The buildup of heavy military hardware around Sukhumi is continuing. In the words of Shevardnadze, neither the Abkhazians nor the North Caucasians fighting on the side of the Abkhaz separatists were, or could have been, in possession of all this. None of the statements by the Russian Defense Ministry to the effect that the Russian side is maintaining neutrality withstand any kind of criticism.

Shevardnadze also stated that despite all the complexities it is necessary to keep calm and as far as possible to refrain from provocative actions in respect of other Russian units stationed on Georgia's territory. "We do not need any extra complications," Shevardnadze declared. "And I am convinced that the world public will not remain indifferent to these dramatic events."

Shevardnadze expressed a hope that the Russian president and his sober-minded entourage will not damage the prestige of their country and will not encourage aggression against a sovereign state—Georgia. He expressed the hope that Boris Yeltsin as supreme commander in chief of the Armed Forces will be able to avert a further escalation of events. If this does not materialize, Shevardnadze said, we will be forced to do whatever Georgia can in these conditions. Each citizen of our country, weapon in hand, will defend the territorial integrity and independence of the motherland. [passage omitted]

Assails Russian 'Reactionary Forces'

LD1603185693 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1745 GMT 16 Mar 93

[by ITAR-TASS correspondent]

[Text] Tbilisi, 16 March—"Georgia will not tolerate any infringement of its independence, no matter what sacrifices it would have to make for this," Eduard Shevardnadze said before flying off to Sukhumi, the capital of Abkhazia.

The head of state sharply criticized "reactionary forces and military leaders" in Russia, who "intend to discredit Russia's democratic movement and the Russian president" by their actions in Georgia.

Stressing that Georgia "has always supported and continues to support the Russian president in the confrontation between the democratic forces and the forces of reaction," Eduard Shevardnadze said that he "does not yet intend to make statements on suspending talks with Russia."

Notes 'Rigid' Russian Stance

OW1603202593 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1943 GMT 16 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] The arrival of Russian troops to the conflict zone in Abkhazia is the main factor capable of provoking a prolongation of the conflict between Georgia and Abkhazia. The above was contained in a statement issued by Chairman of the Georgian parliament Eduard Shevardnadze, issued by Shevardnadze's press spokesman Tuesday [16 March]. The document claimed that the fighting around Sukhumi was being assisted by "aircraft and heavy military hardware which neither the Abkhazian separatists nor the soldiers from the North Caucasus possessed."

Shevardnadze considered, according to the statement, that "events like the visit to the Abkhazian separatists' base in Gudauta by Russian Defense Minister Pavel Grachev should be given their proper estimation." So should "Russia's increasingly rigid position at negotiations and her sudden failure to fulfill her financial obligations to Georgia," the statement continued. Shevardnadze also accused Russia of ignoring her several declarations on the expediency of withdrawing her troops from the conflict zone. He claimed that "reliable bodies" had informed him that a mass attack on Sukhumi was being planned and that this would be joined by military specialists from the Russia Army.

Another announcement made by the Russian ambassador to the Georgian leadership on March 15 about his sudden necessity to leave for Moscow gave rise to certain contemplation, the statement read.

The Georgian leader was convinced that the Russian authorities possessed information that an operation was being carefully planned. "In that case, if the Russian president himself knows nothing one may be tempted to conclude that Russia's reactionary political movements and military leaders intend to discredit, by their actions, both the democratic movement in Russia and Russia's president in the eyes of the world," Shevardnadze stressed. Direct aggression against Georgia was intended to "compensate" for Russia's own problems as well as to escalate the situation in the Caucasus, he said.

A general mobilization alert has been declared in connection with the worsening situation in Georgia.

Announces Mobilization; Flies to Sukhumi

LD1603144593 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1416 GMT 16 Mar 93

[By GIA-TASS correspondent]

[Text] Tbilisi, 16 Mar—Eduard Shevardnadze, head of the parliament of Georgia, announced "mobilization readiness" at today's session of the supreme body of state power. Speaking in connection with sharp deterioration of the situation in the zone of the Georgian-Abkhaz conflict, Eduard Shevardnadze added that the decision to announce general mobilization would be taken by him once he acquainted himself personally with the situation in Sukhumi. The head of parliament appealed to the nation, calling for people to remain calm. He said that the police and other law enforcement bodies were being recalled to barracks.

The head of state again accused Russia of interfering in Georgia's internal affairs. Whereas before, Eduard Shevardnadze said, I avoided using the phrase "Russian-Georgian conflict", now "I declare that we are dealing with a Russian-Georgian conflict, although I admit that President Boris Yeltsin of Russia may not know about all of this. But if that is the case, so much the worse". According to Shevardnadze, "conservative forces at work in Russia want to remove the tension which now prevails in that country by complicating relations with Georgia."

Eduard Shevardnadze once again accused Russian troops of involvement in military operations on the side of Abkhazian formations. Nonetheless "in the present conditions it is necessary to show great prudence, and not to allow any illegal actions against Russian troops stationed on Georgian territory. If it becomes necessary, the republic's leadership will itself make a decision on this issue," he said.

Immediately after making his speech in parliament, Eduard Shevardnadze flew off to Sukhumi.

Proposes Meeting With Yeltsin

OW1703100693 Moscow INTERFAX in English 0952 GMT 17 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] On Tuesday, March 16, Chairman Eduard Shevardnadze of the Georgian parliament forwarded a letter to Russia's President Boris Yeltsin. According to the press service of the Georgian parliament, Eduard Shevardnadze's letter contains a proposal to president Yeltsin to meet with him in order to address the prospects for settling the armed conflict in Abkhazia. In his letter, Chairman Shevardnadze emphasized that "thousands of Russian citizens - mercenaries, as well as active duty military personnel - are directly involved in hostilities against Georgia." Thousands of people are dying, including peaceful population, the letter avers.

"The main blow," Eduard Shevardnadze says, "has been dealt on the relations of good neighborhood between the Georgian and Russian peoples." Eduard Shevardnadze suggested that he could dispatch to Moscow his special envoys or even hold a personal meeting with the Russian president.

Shevardnadze Arrives in Sukhumi

LD1603160393 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1532 GMT 16 Mar 93

[By freelance correspondent Nugzar Kereselidze for ITAR-TASS]

[Text] Sukhumi, 16 Mar (ITAR-TASS)—Eduard Shevardnadze, head of the Georgian state, arrived today in Sukhumi, capital of Abkhazia. He met with Tamaz Nadareishvili, chairman of the Council of Ministers of the Autonomous Republic of Abkhazia, and leaders of Georgian Armed Forces deployed in Abkhazia.

Tamaz Nadareishvili said that as a result of the intensification of the situation "the population is worried but is not panicking; it is setting up a popular army and is ready to support the Georgian Armed Forces."

Contemplates 'Retaliatory Measures'

OW1703101793 Moscow INTERFAX in English 0953 GMT 17 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Georgian leader Eduard Shevardnadze says it was only owing to the resilience of the Georgian forces that Sukhumi has withstood the attack by the Abkhazian troops on Tuesday [16 March]. In his Wednesday morning interview for the Georgian television, he had to admit, however, that "several groups of Abkhazian militants are still holding positions at the heights in the vicinity of the city." In the words of Eduard Shevardnadze, the Georgian troops will carry out mopping-up operations Wednesday to eliminate them.

In touching on the situation in Sukhumi, Eduard Shevardnadze said that the city was subjected to an artillery fire attack throughout the night. A multi-storey building was especially badly damaged, he said. Many casualties are reported. "Unless the bombardment of Sukhumi stops, I will have to make a decision in regards to retaliatory measures," Eduard Shevardnadze warned. Without specifying the measures he was going to resort to, Eduard Shevardnadze said that "Gudauta separatists and their patrons won't like them."

Eduard Shevardnadze also said that the mobilization alert, which Georgia announced on Tuesday, remains in force. "Whether or not I will order general mobilization in the republic will become clear in the next few days," he said. Mr Shevardnadze also informed that this issue will be addressed in Sukhumi at the extraordinary session of Georgia's military command.

The Georgian leader revealed that he had a meeting on Tuesday with Lt General Reut, commander of the group of Russian forces in Trans-Caucasus.

Speaking in the Georgian parliament, Eduard Shevardnadze accused Russia of direct interference in combat activities in Abkhazia. Any pronouncements of neutrality by the Russian defense ministry are ultimately fallacious, the Georgian leader claimed.

Military Operations, Status of Fighting Updated

Reinforcements Arrive in Sukhumi

OW1603201693 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1942 GMT 16 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] The press center of the Georgian Defense Ministry told INTERFAX that by 8:00 P.M. Georgian forces had control of the situation on the fighting line near the Gumista River. All positions have been recovered, and operations are currently underway for knocking out the groups of fighters hidden in the mandarin groves outside of Sukhumi. The press center reports that among those killed and captured, only one in five was Abkhazian—the others were Cossacks, Chechens, Kabardins, and Cherkessians. Back up divisions of the Georgian Defense Ministry have arrived in Sukhumi, the press center said.

The Abkhazian Defense Ministry, in turn, reported that fierce battles were still raging Tuesday [16 March] evening in the suburbs of Sukhumi, especially in the region of the village of Achandara. On March 16 two Georgian army tanks and one armored vehicle were knocked out of action, and one tank and two armored vehicles were captured. Abkhazians captured over 70 Georgian soldiers and officers.

'Bitter Fighting' Reported

OW1603170093 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1437 GMT 16 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Abkhazian forces are continuing the attack on Sukhumi begun on Tuesday [16 March] morning. Bitter fighting is continuing in the northwestern part of the city, INTERFAX has been told by the Abkhazian defense minister in Gudauta. Abkhazian forces are carrying out an offensive against Sukhumi from the hills. Toward 15:00 [1200 GMT] Moscow time, Abkhazian formations had taken the villages of Yashtukha and Shroma, which are effectively suburbs of Sukhumi.

The headquarters of Georgian forces in Sukhumi have reported to INTERFAX that Georgian forces, having launched a counterattack, have driven the attackers back across the Gumista River. The Georgians also report that during fighting on 16 March, about 50 Abkhazians were killed, while the Georgians lost another 20. More than 100 buildings have been destroyed in Sukhumi.

According to available information, Georgian parliament head Eduard Shevardnadze has arrived in Sukhumi. He is currently meeting with Tamaz Nadareishvili, the head of the pro-Georgian government in Abkhazia. It was noted in

particular that the announcement of a general mobilization in Georgia was being discussed.

Shevardnadze on Military Situation

LD1703074993 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 0657 GMT 17 Mar 93

[By GEORGIAN NEWS AGENCY for TASS]

[Text] Sukhumi March 17—As a result of fighting on March 16 the Georgian force managed to regain its main positions and now heavy fighting continues to recapture all positions, Georgian leader Eduard Shevardnadze told the GEORGIAN NEWS AGENCY on Tuesday night, his first day in Sukhumi.

Shevardnadze said both sides had suffered considerable losses, although exact figures had yet to be established.

According to the Georgian leader, his meetings with soldiers and commanders in units and formations convinced him that their morale was very high. Shevardnadze said he also spoke to civilian inhabitants of Sukhumi, who are heroically enduring the hellish conditions which arose as a result of continuous bombardments and artillery shelling.

The bombardment of Sukhumi began at 20.00 on March 15 and continued for 21 hours, Shevardnadze said. Several aircraft bombed mainly the residential quotas of the city, he stressed.

Much combat equipment and machinery is concentrated on the premises of the seismic laboratory in Eshery, where Russian Army unit is deployed. According to Shevardnadze, an ultimatum was sent to the commanders of the unit demanding that the remaining personnel be withdrawn from the premises immediately "to avert the possible conflict".

The Georgian leader said he had invited the commander of the Russian Army unit deployed in Gudauta to meet him in Sukhumi. The invitation was extended through the commandment of the Russian Army in Transcaucasia. Unfortunately, Shevardnadze said, he got no response.

Shevardnadze told a news conference shortly before midnight on Tuesday that after studying in detail the local situation he would decide on general mobilisation on Wednesday or Thursday.

Georgians Battling To Regain Positions

LD1603232693 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 2150 GMT 16 Mar 93

[By Georgian News Agency correspondent]

[Text] Sukhumi, 17 March (TASS)—"As a result of the fighting on 16 March, it has proved possible to regain the main positions, and now hard battles are being fought for the return of all the positions," Head of State Eduard Shevardnadze said on Tuesday evening in a conversation with the correspondent of the Georgian news agency, having arrived in Sukhumi the same day. Both sides, he said, have suffered big losses. The final revised details of them will be made known later. The Georgian leader said his meetings with fighters and commanders in units and subunits have convinced him of "their lofty fighting and patriotic spirit."

E. Shevardnadze said he also had meetings with the population of Sukhumi. "They are heroically suffering the hellish conditions which have developed as a result of the continual bombardments and artillery shelling." The bombardment of Sukhumi, the Georgian leader said, resumed at 2000 in the evening of 16 March and continued until 2100. He said several planes "carried out bombing strikes, mainly on the residential areas of the city."

On the territory of the seismic laboratory in Eshery where a Russian military unit is stationed, a large amount of military equipment was concentrated. The leadership of this unit, Eduard Shevardnadze said, has been given an ultimatum to immediately withdraw the remaining personnel from the territory "in order to prevent any conflict."

The head of the Georgian state also announced that with the help of the command of the group of Russian forces in the Transcaucasus, he has invited to a meeting in Sukhumi the commander of the Russian military unit stationed in Gudauta. E. Shevardnadze, however, noted with regret that there has been no reply.

As has already been announced, the question of general mobilization will be decided on 17 or 18 March after the Georgian leader has familiarized himself in detail with the situation on the spot. Eduard Shevardnadze announced this at a news conference in Sukhumi on 16 March.

More on Counterattack in Sukhumi

OW1603145493 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1430 GMT 16 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Georgian forces, having crossed into the Sukhumi region on Tuesday [16 March] as part of a counterattack, have driven opposing Abkhazian detachments back beyond the Sukhumi River, Interfax has been told at Georgian forces headquarters in Sukhumi.

On Tuesday morning, Abkhazian forces, having forded the river, attacked Georgian positions in the suburbs of Sukhumi.

According to information from Sukhumi, the front lines are being evened up. Both sides have sustained serious losses both in lives and equipment. Georgian forces have taken prisoner some 30 Cossacks and representatives of North Caucasian republics.

The headquarters also reported that at about 12:00 [0900 GMT], a submarine appeared in Sukhumi Bay. After warning fire from artillery on the shore, however, it dove back underwater.

Abkhazia Denies Russian Involvement

LD1603202893 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1904 GMT 16 Mar 93

[by ITAR-TASS correspondent Irina Shchegoleva]

[Text] Sochi, 16 March—A statement from the government of the Republic of Abkhazia distributed today by the Sochi headquarters of Abkhaz refugees categorically asserts that the Russian forces stationed in Abkhazia are not taking part in combat operations but are observing "strict neutrality."

"During the night of 15-16 March, during the storming of the town of Sukhumi by the Abkhaz army, combat aircraft of the armed forces of the Republic of Abkhazia were used," the statement says. The assertion contained in Mr. Shevardnadze's statement that the Russian Air Force took part in the conflict is not in accord with reality," the document says.

At the headquarters of the Abkhaz refugees, the ITAR-TASS correspondent was told that people wounded during the battles for Sukhumi began to arrive at Sochi hospitals today.

Russian Defense Ministry Denies Role

PM1703115593 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 17 Mar 93 First Edition p 2

[Viktor Litovkin report: "Russian Military Deny Taking Part in Fighting"]

[Text] An ITAR-TASS correspondent has reported from Sochi that the situation has sharply deteriorated in Abkhazia. During the night of 15-16 March the Georgian side carried out intensive shelling of Abkhazian positions. At around 0200 hours the Georgian Armed Forces made an unsuccessful attempt to cross the Gumista River. During the fighting some Abkahzian subunits managed to cross to the opposite bank.

As the Georgian Embassy Press Center in Moscow reports, Tamaz Nadareishvili, chairman of the Abkhazian Council of Ministers, informed them that Russian planes bombed the city of Sukhumi during the night. There are numerous casualties and destruction. Toward the morning of 16 March Abkhazian armed formations, supposedly with the assistance of the Russian Armed Forces, carried out an attack on the city.

This information on the fighting for Sukhumi is also confirmed by ITAR-TASS. It reports that combat operations intensified toward dawn. Both sides are using aircraft. According to Abkhazian Defense Ministry information, a commanding height in the northeast part of Sukhumi has been taken under control by the Abkhazian Army as a result of the fighting. But the agency adduces no information on the involvement of Russian forces in the fighting.

The agency cites the Russian Defense Ministry Press Center, which has reported that, in view of the deterioration of the situation on the Georegian-Abkhazian line of confrontation, units and subunits of the Russian Armed Forces on the territory of Abkhazia have been put on a state of readiness to repel possible attacks on Russian military installations and are observing neutrality.

Nevertheless, Eduard Shevardnadze, analyzing in the Georgian parliament the combat operations in the conflict zone, accused Russia of "unceremonious interference" in Georgia's internal affairs and stated that there are forces in Russia which have an interest in fomenting enmity between the two countries. The Georgian Defense Ministry has issued a statement that Su-25 military aircraft took off from an airfield near Gudauta and bombed residential districts in Sukhumi. "What we have here is another attempt by reactionary forces in Russia to wreck talks designed to further the stabilization and settlement of the armed conflict in Georgia," it says.

Georgian Defense Minister Tengiz Kitovani stated in an interview given to the Georgian News Agency that Russia is carrying out aggression against the sovereign Georgian state. Accusing Russian troops of taking part in combat operations on Abkhazia's side, he said: "We have refrained from returning fire in order to give no grounds for accusing us of waging combat operations against Russian troops. But our patience is not boundless. I want to make it absolutely clear that we have sufficient forces to destroy any adversary, but we do not want that—there will be large casualties. We must think about the future. Both Georgians and Abkhazians have to live in this land."

The Russian Defense Ministry Press Center, to which IZVESTIYA turned for explanations, rejected the Georgian Embassy's report on Russian military specialists' involvement in elaborating the plan for a large-scale attack by Abkhazian forces on Sukhumi. They also described the information about the involvement in the operation of two Russian troop battalions, heavy equipment, and aircraft distributed by the Georgian Embassy in Moscow as "not corresponding to reality."

We contacted by telephone the duty officer of the operational group of Russian troops in Gudauta. He likewise categorically denied the report of Russian troop involvement in combat operations on the Sukhumi front and stressed their very strict neutrality in the conflict. And one officer of the group who wished to remain anonymous stated that the barrage of slanderous accusations made against the Russian Army was down, as always, to one thing—the military failures of the Georgian troops. He said that looking for culprits elsewhere was an absolutely pointless exercise.

The Abkhazian Defense Ministry Headquarters, which we also managed to get through to, refused to comment on the situation.

"Our apologies, there is no time," they told us, "fighting is going on for Sukhumi."

Abkhaz Advance Reported

LD1603220093 Moscow Russian Television Network in Russian 2000 GMT 16 Mar 93

[By correspondent K. Bzhaniya; from the "Vesti" newscast]

[Text] [Announcer] One of the most important events today is the stormy crisis in the Georgia-Abkhazia conflict. Our correspondents in both camps are on the phone with our editorial offices literally every half-hour. The latest reports, although very contradictory, are unanimous in one thing: wide-scale combat in the Sukhumi area is continuing. News agencies are quoting Eduard Shevardnadze, who today described this conflict as a Georgia-Russia conflict. At this moment Shevardnadze is holding an emergency conference in Sukhumi with his battle commanders, discussing the question of declaring a general mobilization. Our Georgian correspondent reported by telephone that an hour ago three air-dropped bombs exploded close to the building where this conference is being held. At this hour we have some video footage, but only from the Abkhazian side.

[Begin Bzhaniya recording] Twenty-four hours have passed since the start of the large-scale clash between Georgian and Abkhazian units, but there is no let up in the severity of the fighting. By the evening the massed shelling of the two sides from all weapons systems had intensified. Both Georgian and Abkhazian units are making active use of aircraft. An echelon of an additional consignment of weapons from arsenals in the Transcaucasian Military District, which was on its way to help the Georgian fighters, got stuck at a crossing point in western Georgia, where anti- Shevardnadze detachments of Loti Kobalia are active. At this moment, Abkhaz units are controlling the northwestern part of Sukhumi, the capital of the republic. They have captured a bridgehead on the left and right flanks of the front line and are advancing on the town. [end recording]

I was told just now, literally during this report, that a cameraman for our newscast currently working in Georgia has received shell wounds.

Aircraft, Tanks Deployed

LD1603184993 Moscow Russian Television Network in Russian 1700 GMT 16 Mar 93

[From the "Vesti" newscast]

[Text] The most alarming news today concerns the battles around Sukhumi in which artillery, aircraft, and tanks are being used. Our correspondents' reports have the details.

[Correspondent K. Bzhania] [Video captioned "Abkhazia" shows fighting in progress, a gun mounted on truck, a tank, man firing machine gun, explosion near bridge, soldiers] On the night of 15-16 March, after intensive artillery shelling, Georgian units went onto the offensive along the whole length of the Eshera-Sukhumi front, but they were halted by a counterblow from the Abkhazian armed forces. The battle went on all night and intensified at dawn.

During the day, the situation developed as follows: units of the governmental forces of Abkhazia managed to throw back the enemy, to cross the Gumista on the left flank, and to go onto the counteroffensive. Active use is being made of combat aircraft and heavy artillery.

Toward evening, the main line of confrontation passes through the suburbs of the capital of Abkhazia, Sukhumi. Individual groupings are shooting on the outskirts of the city. There are dead and wounded.

Abkhaz forces have managed to seize strategically important heights, making it possible to encircle the capital of Abkhazia.

[Correspondent N. Kandiashvili] [Video captioned "Georgia" shows aircraft bombing a town, soldiers getting onto truck, casualties] According to reports from the press center of the Main Staff of the Georgian Armed Forces in Sukhumi, Ardzinba's Gudauta's forces again opened up intensive fire against the positions of Georgian troops. In the afternoon, a Su-25 aircraft overflew the village of Shroma. It buzzed it several times and disappeared in the direction of Gudauta. Toward 1600, a concentration of the enemy's personnel and equipment was observed near the villages of Nizhnyaya Eshera and Verkhnyaya Eshera. A little later, the Gudauta formations carried out an intensive shelling of Sukhumi.

The shells exploded in various rayons of the town. About 20 apartment blocks were damaged or destroyed. Seven shells exploded on the territory of a sanatorium belonging to Russia. During the operation, two civilians were killed and 17 wounded.

[Studio announcer] According to the latest data, intensive battles are under way near the River Gumista. As was reported by the press center of the main staff of the Georgian armed forces stationed in Abkhazia, Su-25 aircraft bombed the positions of Georgian forces and rayons of Sukhumi several times. There are casualties amongst the civilian population.

Georgian Troops Shell Russian Units

OW1703125393 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1219 GMT 17 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] On Wednesday [17 March] morning, Georgian troops shelled the Russian military units, located in the laboratory and health-building center in the villages of

Lower Esheri and Upper Esheri, near Sukhumi, the Abkhazian Defense Ministry reports. During the attack, 3 civilians were killed.

Meanwhile, according to the Georgian Defense Ministry's press center, on March 17, the Georgian troops have been carrying out operations to eliminate the Abkhazian units which consolidated themselves on several heights around Sukhumi during the offensive on March 16, for instance near the village of Achadara.

According to the press center, over the past 24 hours, at least 300 Abkhazians were killed or wounded. The Georgian troops lost 35 people; more than 60 men were wounded.

Georgian Strike on Russian Lab Kills 3

LD1703093793 Moscow Mayak Radio Network in Russian 0900 GMT 17 Mar 93

[Text] According to the press service of the Abkhazian Supreme Soviet, a concentrated strike from "Grad" installations was inflicted from the Georgian side at 1000 [0700 GMT] on the seismic laboratory of the Russian troops and the military sanatorium of the Russian Defense Ministry. As a result of the shelling three people were killed—two women and one man.

Abkhaz Offensive 'Repulsed'

AU1703093493 Tbilisi Radio Tbilisi Network in Georgian 0800 GMT 17 Mar 93

[Text] News from Sukhumi. Here is a recording that we received on the phone this morning. We spoke with Soso Margishvili, head of the press center of the Main Staff of the Georgian Armed Forces in Sukhumi.

[Beginning recording] [Margishvili] During the night, Russian planes again bombed the city of Sukhumi several times. There is destruction in Sukhumi and casualties among the peaceful population. At 0300 [0000 GMT], the enemy again tried to launch an offensive at the River Gumista. However, their offensive ended unsuccessfully; it was repulsed and they were unable to cross the River. They retreated, having suffered heavy losses.

In fact, battles continued throughout the night. They are currently continuing although they are not as intensive as those yesterday because the enemy has suffered heavy losses; they have lost several hundred men. Mopping-up operations are now also continuing aimed at liquidating those individual fighters who have hidden on our side of the Gumista.

[Reporter] Batono [Georgian polite form of address] Soso, so it has been confirmed that Russian soldiers have in the main been fighting on our side [of the river]?

[Margishvili] It is a fact that Russians have been participating.

[Reporter] What is the current situation in Sukhumi? What about the population?

[Margishvili] The situation is fairly normal in Sukhumi under the circumstances. There is no panic in the city. Apart from the fact that individual inhabitants are naturally afraid, one can say that there is no panic in the city. They are hopeful and are convinced that our Army can repulse the offensive and win the battle and so forth. There is of course destruction; bombs have been dropped; there are casualties. All this is causing complications but there is really no panic in the city.

[Reporter] There is no danger of Sukhumi being taken, is there?

[Margishvili] No one will give them Sukhumi.

[Reporter] What is happening at the moment?

[Margishvili] There is fighting going on at the moment. Positional fighting, although it is not as active as yesterday. Batoni Roini, individual fighters are currently being liquidated. Yesterday, several groups crossed over. These groups have been destroyed. As for those who have survived, some have fled to Achadara but these are very few in number. Some have hidden among the mandarins, others have crept into cellars. These individuals are now being routed out. They have all practically been destroyed. Those who attacked yesterday have, to all intents and purposes, been destroyed.

[Reporter] Batono Soso, what information do you have regarding casualties?

[Margishvili] On their side, at least several hundred men, including dead, seriously wounded, and those taken prisoner.

[Reporter] How many have been captured?

[Margishvili] I can't recall the exact number but several dozen.

[Reporter] On our side?

[Margishvili] According to preliminary information, we have approximately 30-35 dead and, of course, more wounded. Several dozen wounded.

[Reporter] Do you have any information from Ochamchire?

[Margishvili] It was relatively quiet in Ochamchire yesterday. [end recording]

Georgians Force Abkhaz Retreat 17 Mar

LD1703114193 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1106 GMT 17 Mar 93

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Irina Shchegoleva]

[Text] Sochi March 17 TASS—Georgian and Abkhazian forces continued fighting near the sea port of Sukhumi on Wednesday, informed sources told ITAR-TASS. The Georgian troops forced Abkhazians back to their positions after considerable losses: 120 men were killed and

very many wounded or injured in the past 24 hours. Four wounded men were hospitalised in Sochi after fighting.

Prime Minister Briefs Foreign Envoys

LD1603234793 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1810 GMT 16 Mar 93

[by Georgian News Agency correspondent]

[Text] Tbilisi, 16 March—Georgian Prime Minister Tengiz Sigua today met the ambassadors and heads of diplomatic missions accredited to the republic. He informed them about the situation in Abkhazia, describing it as "extraordinarily complex."

Tengiz Sigua announced that Georgian Head of State Eduard Shevardnadze, who is in Sukhumi, had a telephone conversation with the prime minister in which he confirmed his opinion that "Russian military formations and Russian mercenaries are taking part in the confrontation with Georgian forces."

On behalf of his colleagues, German Ambassador Guenther Dahloff, doyen of the diplomatic corps, expressed profound concern at the situation that has taken shape in the republic, and assured that they will immediately communicate to their governments the information received from Mr. Sigua.

Circassians Ready To Save Abkhazians

OW1703125993 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1220 GMT 17 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] If Georgia announces general mobilization, the World Circassian Association will have to ask the Circassian people, including the 5-million strong Circassian diaspora, to help save the Abkhazian brothers from genocide, says the telegram which President of the World Circassian Association, Yuriy Kalmykov, sent to Georgian leader Eduard Shevardnadze on Wednesday [17 March].

The telegram also says that "in this situation, military methods were absolutely out of the question".

Estonia

Officials Denounce Russian Foreign Minister's Statement

Kozyrev Speech 'Unacceptable'

OW1603214793 Moscow BALTFAX in English 1736 GMT 16 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] At a press conference on the outcome of Estonian Cabinet's sitting, the Estonian Prime Minister Mart Laar declared that Estonia's government was struck by the Russian Foreign Minister Andrey Kozyrev's statement voiced in Kaliningrad and was forced to include its discussion into the agenda of its Tuesday [16 March] session.

Responding to our BALTFAX correspondent concerning the essence of the discussed issue, Mart Laar pointed out that the government still has no full text of Kozyrev's statement and it was forced to use its text published in the press. It should be taken into consideration that it was an improvised speech, Mart Laar said. But nevertheless, the point of view voiced by Kozyrev is unacceptable for Estonia.

"The republic's Foreign Ministry is set to examine all the circumstances related to Kozyrev's statement and to give an official answer to the Russian party. Such statements voiced at such a high levels disturb us," continued Mart Laar. "However, there is certain logic in such statements minding the events going on in Russia," concluded Mart Laar.

Government To Issue Protest Note

WS1703114593 Tallinn ETA NEWS RELEASE in English 1908 GMT 16 Mar 93

[Text] Tallinn, March 16—Estonia's government will discuss a statement by Russia's Foreign Minister, Andrey Kozyrev, at its next session and send a note of protest to Russia's Foreign Ministry, Prime Minister Mart Laar told a government briefing on Tuesday [16 March].

Kozyrev, at his meeting with Russian navy officers in Kaliningrad on March 15, had said that he "favoured considerable Russian presence in the Baltics" as a necessary means to support Moscow's policy in the countries, Interfax news agency reported.

The intentions expressed in Kozyrev's statements are inacceptable, Laar said.

'Chauvinistic Thinking' Decried

OW1603214593 Moscow BALTFAX in English 1736 GMT 16 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] In his interview with our BALTFAX correspondent, Rein Helme, the chairman of the Defense Commission of Estonia's State Assembly, emphasized that the statement of the Russian Foreign Minister Andrey Kozyrev about the necessity of "an impressive" presence of the Russian forces in the Baltics testifies to the fact that "chauvinist thinking has captured the supreme echelons of power of our eastern neighbor." He expressed his regret as currently democratic forces do not "dominate" in Russia and this situation is fraught with a serious danger for Estonia.

According to the parliamentarian, this threat is aggravated by possibility that Russia's armed forces can come out of the Center's control.

Helme believes that under this situation we should unite our efforts, at the international level as well, to speed up the withdrawal of the Russian forces from Estonia and other Baltic states. To oppose possible threat, the nation necessitates a reliable state defense and efficient defensive force. The defensive doctrine being discussed in the republic's parliament is aimed at their creation, Helme declared.

Statement 'Gross Act of Interference'

OW1703003393 Moscow BALTFAX in English 1932 GMT 16 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] An initiative group from the Estonian Decolonization Foundation has called a statement by Russian Foreign Minister Andrey Kozyrev on February 27 a gross act of interference in the internal affairs of another state. Kozyrev said that the formation of the organization was a manifestation of aggressive nationalism in the republic.

A statement issued by the initiative group at a press conference Tuesday [16 March] stressed that Russia's foreign minister was virtually demanding restrictions on freedom of thought and speech in Estonia. "This tendency in the foreign policy of our eastern neighbor has its roots in the 18th century when Russia assumed notoriety as the Gendarme of Europe" the statement read.

"Russia has to realize that the preservation and defense of a small nation is an acute problem and that here the notion of being a superpower or the imperialist way of thought of previous colonial powers does not exist," the statement continued.

The group also declared its intention to grant assistance to the government in its efforts to formulate and put into effect a national policy. Yuriy Estam, the group's head, stated at the press conference that the problem regarding decolonization must be resolved either by colonialists leaving Estonia or by their integration with society as it stands.

The foundation is in favor of granting those wishing to leave Estonia financial, legal and diplomatic assistance.

Government To Deal 'Seriously' With Russian Spying

WS1703110593 Tallinn BNS in English 0732 GMT 17 Mar 93

[Text] Tallinn, Mar 16, BNS—The Estonian government intends to seriously deal with the joint object of the Russian military reconnaissance and KGB in the Juri parish, Premier Mart Laar on Tuesday [16 March] told the press.

In September 1991, an agreement was concluded between Estonia and chief of the Soviet KGB Vadim Bakatin according to which Russian reconnaissance object in the Juri parish was handed over to the Russian army unit No 44417.

According to the treaty, Estonia is not to dispute the functioning of the object until the order of handing over the object has been fixed by inter-state negotiations. Estonia must guarantee electricity supply, telephone communications and communal service having the right to check the operation of the unit.

BNS has been informed that the military unit can perform radio espionage within a couple of thousand kilometres and also eavesdrop telephone calls.

Mart Laar said that the government is studying the Bakatin - Savisaar treaty and intends to use Estonia's right to inspect the espionage object.

Paldiski Submarine Base To Remain Closed, Under Guard

WS1703120093 Tallinn ETA NEWS RELEASE in English 1917 GMT 16 Mar 93

[Text] Tallinn, March 16—A former Soviet nuclear submarine base, a north Estonian town, Paldiski, will stay a closed town, but will be guarded by Estonia's police and visiting permits will be issued by Estonian civil authorities instead of Russian military, the government's press office informed ETA.

An assistant to Prime Minister Mart Laar, Juri Tikk and Gero Kartau, the chancellor of the Estonian Ministry of the Interior, met Russian admirals Belov and Olkhovikov on Tuesday [16 March] to discuss the future status of the town.

As nuclear reactors in the town constitute a major threat, Paldiski will remain a closed town. A considerable change, however, will take place as Estonia's police will replace Russian military at town gates and entrance permits will be issued by the country's civil authorities.

Defense Minister Rebas on 'Tension' in Parliament

LD1703121793 Tallinn Radio Tallinn Network in Estonian 1800 GMT 16 Mar 93

[Report by correspondent Gunnar Paal]

[Excerpts] Tensions have been whipped up here reently in the Riigikogu by issues to do with state defense. Today, Defense Minister Hain Rebas faced the Riigikogu. There is a whole range of issues in the current complex situation which are related to the drawing up of a state defense concept. The concept is being drawn up, and yet there are conflicting opinions on this score.

[Begin recording] [Rebas] Yes, indeed. Such opinions have been expressed in particular by individuals who are not at all familiar with things, who do not know what the Defense Ministry does, and who have not bothered to come and visit with us at the Defense Ministry and familiarize themselves with the situation. [passage omitted]

[Paal] Here in the Riigikogu reproaches were made against you personally to the effect that you do not deal with state defense issues.

[Rebas] [laughs] Yes, what can I say to this?

[Paal] And so, problems are numerous and during the past few weeks and months you, alas, have been the victim of this kind of personalized criticism. It must be fairly uncomfortable in such a role.

[Rebas] I have never experienced anything like this in my life, at such a level, with such intensity, and presented so convincingly and in such a pompous manner, as well as being amplified by Estonian [words indistinct]. [passage omitted]

We have drawn up the key principles for state defense and Riigikogu members have these on their desks, and they have now been under discussion: in substance only by a few Riigikogu members, by very few indeed. They will continue to serve as a basis. [passage omitted] [end recording]

Retired Officers Denounce Rebas 'Fifth Column' Remark

OW1203190993 Moscow BALTFAX in English 1645 GMT 12 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] The Union of Veteran Organizations of Estonia published a statement on Friday [12 March] saying that Estonian Defense Minister Hain Rebas' statement to the effect that the retired Russian Armed Forces officers living in the republic are armed and form a fifth column is provocative and aimed to intimidate Estonians and fan up mistrust and hostility between the country's principal communities.

Rebas, addressing reporters on February 10, called the retired officers of the Soviet and Russian Armed Forces living in Estonia as some of the main sources of danger for the Estonian people. He said 70 percent of the 9,100 veterans had weapons, including automatic ones.

The union hopes the Russian Foreign and Defense Ministries will immediately react to Rebas' "clumsy escapade."

President Returns From 'Unofficial' Visit to Germany

LD1203134993 Tallinn Radio Tallinn Network in Estonian 1800 GMT 11 Mar 93

[Text] President Lennart Meri returned today from a two-day unofficial visit to Germany. This was reported to BNS by the president's press service. In the course of his visit, Lennart Meri met German bankers. In April, some bankers are expected to pay a working visit to Estonia. The president met also the president of Schleswig-Holstein the chairman of the German Social Democratic Party, the governing mayor of the city of Hamburg, as well as German public figures.

Foreign Minister Meets Danish Counterpart

LD1703111693 Tallinn Radio Tallinn Network in Estonian 1000 GMT 17 Mar 93

[Text] Estonian Foreign Minister Trivimi Velliste this morning met with his Danish colleague Niels Helveg Petersen [in Helsinki]. The Foreign Ministry's press service told the Baltic News Service that during their meeting the ministers discussed the withdrawal of Russian troops from the Baltic countries, the ensuring of safe sea transport on the Baltic Sea, and the Russian proposal to introduce the post of a human rights commissar within the Council of Baltic States.

The foreign ministers acknowledged that the introduction of the post of a human rights commissar should be considered, but that the area covered should be considerably more extensive than suggested by Russia; it should cover all of the Baltic region, and not only Estonia, Latvia, and Estonia, as recommended by Moscow. Also the commissar's range of action should be more extensive.

The foreign ministers' meeting will end today.

Latvia

Defense Minister Discusses Border Security With Baltic Envoys

LD1203182393 Riga Radio Riga Network in Latvian 1400 GMT 12 Mar 93

[Text] In Riga today, Latvia's Defense Minister Talavs Jundzis met with ambassadors of the Baltic states to discuss questions of Baltic regional security, particularly problems relating to border controls in Latvia and the other Baltic states. The purpose of the meeting is to acquaint the foreign ambassadors with the situation that has arisen in border defense, and to win the support of the other Baltic littoral states in settling these problems.

Also present at the discussions were Latvia's Deputy Foreign Minister Martins Virsis, Latvian Defense Forces Commander Dainis Turlajs, and other representatives of the Defense Ministry.

Lithuanian Prosecutor General Arrives

OW1603113493 Moscow BALTFAX in English 1048 GMT 16 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] A Lithuanian judicial delegation led by Prosecutor General Arturas Paulauskas has arrived for a one-day visit in Riga. Deputy Prosecutor General of Latvia Rita Aksenoka has told BF [BALTFAX] that the delegation will negotiate with its Latvian counterparts the possibility of interrogating the former deputy commander of the Riga black berets Sergey Parfyonov who has been tried and sentenced in Latvia.

Lithuania has resumed the investigation of the 1991 murder of customs officials and policemen at the checkpoint in Medininkai following an article in the Respublika. The paper claimed Sergey Parfyonov was involved in the attack on the post.

According to Aksenoka, the understanding between Latvia and Russia that Parfyonov will serve his term in Russia and the absence of an official Lithuanian request for the extradition of Parfyonov are obstacles to cooperation with Lithuania in this matter.

Trade Agreement Concluded With Estonia

WS1703110193 Tallinn BNS in English 0732 GMT 17 Mar 93

[Text] Riga, Mar 16, BNS—Estonian Premier Mart Laar and his Latvian counterpart Ivars Godmanis reached an agreement Monday [15 March] a bilateral free trade.

While it is impossible to conclude a trilateral free trade agreement among Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania, said Laar, one will be concluded between Estonia and Latvia.

One of the main subjects of the meeting was mutual accounting after the introduction of the Latvian national currency lat. Laar said Latvia asked how Estonia has managed to curb the inflation.

The two premiers also discussed the new visa regime established by Latvia, economic reforms in Estonia and Latvia, an investment protection agreement, and negotiations with Russia.

"Latvia wishes to learn about Estonia's experience in establishing the visa regime and closing the borders," said Laar. "In the nearest future, a Latvian border defense delegation will arrive in Estonia."

The meeting was also attended by Estonian Minister of Economics Toomas Sildmae, Defense Minister Hain Rebas and the president of the Bank of Estonia, Siim Kallas.

The Latvian Delegation included Minister of Industry and Energy Aivars Millers, Defense Minister Talavs Jundzis, president of the Bank of Latvia Einars Repse, counselor to the Premier Edvin Inkens, and head of the Foreign Ministry protocol department Aija Odina.

Popular Front Announces Election Platform

WS1603131093 Riga LETA in English 1048 GMT 16 Mar 93

[Text] Riga, March 16 (LETA)—Latvian Popular Front has prepared its programme for the 5th parliamentary elections in Latvia, particularly with the achievements in privatization of small enterprises and formation of private business sector, and the progress in agriculture, energy and finances, Basil Kovalsky, one of the World Bank directors, said at a news conference on Monday [15 March]. He mentioned only one key drawback at the present stage—the delay of privatization of medium-size and large industrial enterprises.

According to Mr. Kovalsky, the World Bank will help Latvia in two main directions—finances, where the loan of 45 million dollars has already been granted, and execution of reforms in such important spheres as energy, finances, agriculture and social problems.

The chairman of Latvian Council of Ministers, Ivars Godmanis, quoted figures reflecting position of various branches of economy in the three Baltic states showing the Latvia was more successful than its neighbours.

Lithuania

Brazauskas Announces Composition of New Government

LD1603181993 Vilnius Radio Vilnius Network in Russian 1300 GMT 16 Mar 93

[Report by Algirdas Usas from the parliamentary studio at the Lithuanian Seimas]

[Text] Dear listeners, this is Algirdas Usas. Just a few minutes ago, Lithuanian Prime Minister Adolfas Slezevicius presented the composition of the new government to Lithuanian President Algirdas Brazauskas. Slezevicius [passage indistinct] the president shook hands and signed a decree confirming the composition of the government.

After the signing, the president said:

[Begin Brazauskas recording] Esteemed government, I have just signed a decree, which reads as follows:

On the composition of the government of the Republic of Lithuania: Being guided by Section 4 of Article 84 of the Constitution of the Republic of Lithuania, and bearing in mind the presentation by Lithuanian Prime Minister Adolfas Slezevicius, I confirm the government of the Republic of Lithuania as follows:

Julius Veselka—minister of economy
Algimantas Vladas Stasiukynas—minister of power engineering
Eduardas Vilkelis—minister of finance
Audrius Butkevicius—minister of national defense
Dainius Trinkunas—minister of culture and education
Ignotas Kovalcikas—minister of forestry
Albertas Ambraziejus Sinevicius—minister of industry and trade
Gintautas Zintelis—minister of communications and information
Teodoras Medaiskis—minister of social security
Algirdas Vapsys—minister of construction and city planning
Jonas Prapiestis—minister of justice
Jonas Birziskis—minister of transport
Jurgis Briedikis—minister of health
Povilas Gylys—minister of foreign affairs
Pranas Vaitiekunas—minister of internal affairs
Rimantas Karazia—minister of agriculture

[Signed] Lithuanian President Algirdas Brazauskas
[Dated] Vilnius, 16 March 1993, Decree No. 15 [end recording]

'Pragmatist' New Premier Discusses Policy Aims

MK1603152393 Moscow NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA in Russian 16 Mar 93 p 3

[Tamara Nikolayeva report: "New Prime Minister's First Press Conference. Adolfas Slezevicius: 'In Relations With Russia We Should Strive for Normal Economic Cooperation'"]

[Text] Government changes being frequent in the former USSR republics—a condition typical of the state of economic and political imbalance—the office of prime minister is turning today into a sort of phantasmagoric position with a sacrificial tinge. Indeed, six prime ministers have come and gone in Lithuania within the three years since the restoration of its independence, and all of them were quitting their post if not anathematized, then mercilessly criticized by the right wing, and the left wing, and the centrists and blamed for all the symptoms of economic crisis. The prime minister's chair was rocking even under the charming "amber lady," Kazimiera Prunskiene, and collapsed after she dared at one time to raise prices to a level that today seems laughable. Since then prices, including those of staple food products, have gone up a hundredfold. Nor could a sharp fall in living standards be prevented by the buffer policy pursued by Gediminas Vagnorius, who took over from Prunskiene, as wages and salaries that were raised almost once a month could not keep pace with the prices. As a consequence, over 70 percent of the Lithuanian population live below the poverty line, and nearly every second family in Vilnius pays nothing for housing or communal services, not wishing to die of hunger in an apartment that is paid for.

One of the election promises made by the Democratic Labor Party and President Algirdas Brazauskas was to improve social safety nets, to help people survive in the market environment. However, not a month passed after the presidential election before prices went up again by between 50 and 80 percent, while wages were raised by only 15 percent. This is why for some people the interest in the new prime minister at the 12 March Seimas press conference was mixed with amusement: What had prompted the successful entrepreneur, the chief of a Lithuanian-Norwegian joint venture with a $10,000 salary, to voluntarily put his head in the noose and agree to take on today's most thankless job?

The new prime minister did not approve of the journalists' interest in his own financial affairs, but he did express his views on the current state of the Lithuanian economy and outlined ways leading out of the crisis in a clear and specific fashion—which made the correspondents recall an epithet given to him the other day by his predecessor, Bronislavos Lubis: "He is a businesslike man, accustomed to nitty-gritty work."

What diagnosis did Adolfas Slezevicius give with respect to the current Lithuanian economy? In the past few years the republic's agriculture has suffered greater damage than under forced Soviet collectivization, he said. In industry, where a production slump continues, the quantity of privatization checks exceeds the value of assets. Meanwhile, Western credits have so far been used not for modernization and restructuring purposes, but almost exclusively for purchasing energy resources. Nonetheless, the worsening of the economic malaise, one cause of which was an intensive drive for reforms without clear preliminary analysis of the economic conditions in which they were to be implemented or of their consequences, is no reason for stopping or cutting back on the reforms.

There is no alternative to a free economic market, Slezevicius stated, reaffirming his principled stance that all the transformations that have already begun should be continued, but in a more pragmatic fashion. In the first instance, according to the new prime minister, it is essential to establish clear-cut priorities. By all appearances Slezevicius, who has experience in the organization of agricultural production, will first of all deal directly with that sector, because today Lithuania's agriculture is in limbo to a greater extent than any other sector. The prime minister said that the state needed to subsidize the agricultural producer (to a lesser degree) and consumers of agricultural produce (to a greater degree) in order to cushion the effect on the population of increasing staple food prices. A credit of around 20 billion coupons will be needed for extra payments to the workers of budget-financed institutions, pensioners, students, and other people who need social protection. At the same time, the prime minister believes it necessary, given the current inflation rate, to establish a ceiling for the purchase prices of agricultural produce so as not to completely lose control of the situation. Since the Lithuanian opposition is now persistently repeating that Russia poses a risk and that the new Lithuanian authorities may be caught in yet another imperial trap if they fail to take a clear and cautious stance vis-a-vis Moscow, the prime minister was naturally asked at the press conference how he saw the relations between Lithuania and Russia. Adolfas Slezevicius again showed himself an unflappable pragmatist. "During the 50 years of Soviet occupation the Lithuanian economy was so integrated into the Soviet Union's economy that turning away toward the West requires not only time but also a clear understanding of how this can be done," he responded. As for credits, the prime minister stressed, wherever Lithuania gets them—from Russia, or from Germany—what is important is that they be of practical use. "In relations with Russia we should strive for normal economic cooperation," the prime minister said.

Arguably, the new prime minister survived his first meeti ; with journalists with dignity, leaving the impression of a level-headed and practical person. The Seimas factions and committees are now discussing candidates for ministerial positions. As early as this week Lithuania's cabinet will be formed and its plan of work approved.

Former Prime Minister Addresses Protestors

OW1703003193 Moscow BALTFAX in English 1933 GMT 16 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] An angry crowd of about one thousand people gathered outside the building of Lithuanian parliament on Tuesday [16 March] afternoon saying they wanted to talk with the President and the Speaker of Parliament.

The picketers demanded higher benefits for old age pensioners and chanted slogans against communists and president Brazauskas.

For his part, Brazauskas speaking in parliament said he thought that the picket was organized by whom he described as certain political forces.

To an extent, his theory was confirmed by the speech that former Prime Minister Gediminas Vagnorius made before the crowd. He accused parliament of failing to meet the people's demands despite opposition proposals. Vagnorius called on the picketers to gather again on Thursday unless their demands were met by parliament.

"If need be, we'll call demonstrations, pickets and other action", Vagnorius said.

Death of Air Force Chief Believed Suicide

OW1703004693 Moscow BALTFAX in English 1738 GMT 16 Mar 93

[Following item transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] A corps of a senior official of Lithuania's Home Guard Ministry, the chief of the republic's Air Forces

headquarters Captain Rolandas Banionis, was found in his flat at night on March 12-13.

Today's issue of the newspaper Lietuvos Aidas reports that the officer's pistol was found near the corps with a cartridge wound in his head.

The Kaunas police and the Air Forces leadership are investigating the incident. The version of a suicide is the most probable, the police believes.

Banionis was born in 1964, he started its service in Lithuania's armed forces autumn 1990. The newspaper asserts that the chief of the Lithuanian Air Forces headquarters "was greatly concerned over the political changes occurring in the republic and the negative processes in the system of Home Guard Ministry." The Home Guard Ministry's Foreign and Domestic relations department declared to our Baltfax correspondent that there is nothing to add to the message about Banionis' death.

Belarus Officials Pay Visit, Sign Agreements

LD1603204393 Vilnius Radio Vilnius Network in Lithuanian 1700 GMT 16 Mar 93

[Text] Today, after completion of the negotiations between the delegations of Lithuania and Belarus, interstate agreements on free trade and trade and economic cooperation in 1993 were signed in the white hall of the government building in Vilnius.

These agreements were signed on behalf of their governments by acting Lithuanian Prime Minister Bronislovas Lubys, and Vyacheslav Kebich, chairman of the Belarus Council of Ministers.

Today, the Belarusian state delegation headed by Vyacheslav Kebich was received by Lithuanian President Algirdas Brazauskas.

It was noted during a discussion on further cooperation between the two states that they should be rendered more active by both sides, relations between these neighboring countries should be developed in the sphere of economy, science, and culture. Aspects of the life of Lithuanians in Belarus and of Belarusians in Lithuania were discussed.

Vyacheslav Kebich today had a meeting with the chairman of the Lithuanian Seimas, Ceslovas Jursenas. The further development of bilateral relations was discussed.

The Belarus delegation is satisfied with the negotiations and encounters in Lithuania. They took place in an atmosphere of complete understanding, Belarus Prime Minister Vyacheslav Kebich stated at today's news conference. The guest informed journalists that the signed agreements were a significant step in the development of the relations of the neighboring states. By the way, claims about the sold Belarus property—a sanatorium—in Druskininkai look today a little different. According to Vyacheslav Kebich, it has been unexpectedly established that there is Lithuanian property and Lithuanian enterprises in Belarus. They are Lithuanian enterprises in the Grodno and Vitebsk oblasts. Thus both sides are interested in the solution of the problem.

Vyacheslav Kebich assured that Belarus had no claims on Lithuania as regards the situation of Belarusians in Lithuania. Therefore, the problems of the life of Lithuanians in Belarus and of Belarusians in Lithuania were not discussed in detail. More attention was paid to the prospects of establishing a Belarusian secondary school in Vilnius.